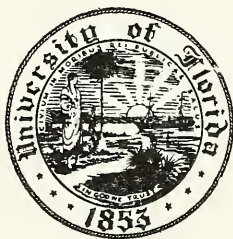
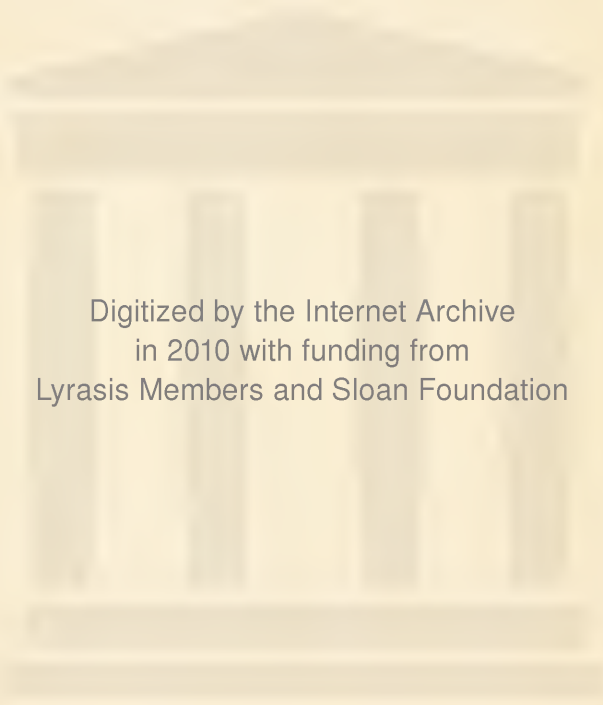




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THE  
ADOLESCENT GIRL

A BOOK FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS

BY

WINIFRED RICHMOND, Ph. D.

PSYCHOLOGIST, GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL FOR  
THE INSANE, WASHINGTON. LECTURER IN  
PSYCHOLOGY, GEORGE WASHINGTON  
UNIVERSITY, WASHINGTON, D. C.

New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1925

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

136.7354  
P. 232a  
C. 4

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Set up and electrotyped. Published June, 1925.



To  
MRS. A. E. HUNTER  
*Mother and Friend  
of Girls*



## PREFACE

The problems that confront us upon any serious attempt to understand the adolescent girl are many and various, and so far there appears no royal road to their solution. From time immemorial a glamour and a mystery has attended the advent of the girl into womanhood; myth and folklore, poetry and song, among primitive races and in ancient times have glorified girlhood, flowering into richest bloom in the story of the Virgin Mother. And in our day this glorification still continues, in spite of the efforts of realists; girlhood mysterious, alluring, flits through poetry and fiction, drama and art, inviting and retreating, laughing at the efforts of its elders to understand, yet heavy with the sorrow of being misunderstood.

The world of adolescence is a very different world from that of childhood. The latter, in spite of its perplexities and problems, of vast importance to the child, is still a sheltered and protected world, with well-defined boundaries and limited responsibilities. Adolescence, surmounting the hills of childhood, looks out upon a new, vast, bewildering world, where old landmarks no longer serve and old objectives are left behind.

In a time like the present, marked by change and flux, with the downfall of old standards and the overthrow of time-worn conventions, when so many of us are groping our way amid a chaos of doubts and perplexities, there is more need than ever for us elders to take stock of our knowledge, that in so far as possible we may be prepared to accord the girl the measure of understanding that she needs, and to guide her uncertain footsteps toward worthy social goals.

The last quarter-century has seen a great change in our attitude toward the problems of adolescence. Where formerly they were viewed largely from a sentimental standpoint and efforts at their solution proceeded along moral or philanthropic lines, we have latterly been busy studying the matter dispassionately, weighing and measuring, collecting statistics, and trying scientific experiments. The physician, the psychologist, the psychiatrist, and the sociologist, to say nothing of the anthropologist and the experimental pedagogue, have added their quota, until we now have a considerable body of knowledge concerning the growing girl and her mental and emotional life. To condense it all within the compass of a single volume would be an impossible feat. A book such as this can do little more than mention the problems which seem most insistent, as judged by the frequency

with which they are brought to the attention of the psychologist or psychiatrist, and refer the reader to works in which they are dealt with more fully. Much of the literature upon adolescence is as yet highly technical, and much more is locked up in reports, monographs, and scientific journals, where it is almost impossible for the unaided reader to discover it. In the following pages there is no attempt to cite authorities for every statement made, but a carefully selected bibliography will be found at the close of each chapter, which it is hoped will induce the reader to seek farther for information on the points that can only be touched upon in the text.

The cases cited, unless otherwise credited, have come under the personal observation of the writer, to whom the adolescent girl has long been an object of transcendent interest. In the hope that it may serve as a sort of signpost toward answers to some of the questions which invariably arise where girls are dealt with, in home, in school, or in other institutions, this little book is written.



## INTRODUCTION

Dr. Richmond has produced a book on the adolescent girl which is the outcome of an extensive experience and which is addressed to the average educated mother. The several aspects of her subject are discussed in six chapters in a concise, simple, common-sense sort of way that is calculated to remove from the mind of the reader the last vestiges of those several superstitions with which the development and adolescence of the young girl are still surrounded. It is significant that not until the fifth chapter do we find the heading "The Normal Girl." Previously the author has discussed the abnormal girl and the delinquent girl, and only after that discussion does she take up the problem of the normal girl. This is an indication of the direction in which our thinking has changed in recent years. A generation ago normal and abnormal were separate and distinct—two entities that had little in common. Now we seek in the disintegrated minds of the abnormal for those elements of structure which are hidden in the complexities of the normal arrangement. Disease pulls apart, so that we may see within, and we are learning as much of the normal from the

abnormal as we ever used to suppose that we could learn of the abnormal from the normal.

Dr. Richmond has had much to do with the problems of training and of education and these matters lie close to her interests and are much in her mind. I am reminded, apropos of them, of a recent incident. It had become necessary to consider the remodeling of the hospital power, heat, and lighting plant, and one morning a young engineer called upon me, representing a corporation that devoted its large interests to the problem of combustion, and discussed my plan of remodeling from his point of view. His proposition was that he would find out the kind and quality of the coal that we would have to burn and that then he would design furnaces and stokers accordingly so as to insure the highest degree of efficiency as the net result. Of course no one would ever think of attempting to burn soft coal in furnaces originally designed for hard coal, but now comes the engineer with much greater refinement and precision in his methods and studies the coal in detail and designs his furnace and stokers in equal detail. This is a fair example of engineering as applied to the problem of combustion, or, for purposes of the analogy which I am about to make, applied to the problem of securing the greatest amount of power out of a given kind and quality of coal.



The outstanding feature of man's progress to date has been his rapid increase in knowledge of his environment and in his ability to control and to modify that environment. During the period of the opening up of this great continent progress in this direction was the great thing to be desired, but now that the days of the frontiersmen are rapidly becoming matters of past history, when the transcontinental railroads have brought the remotest parts of the country into relatively close communication, and with the increasing population and its concentration in large cities, it becomes more and more evident that if man is not going to come a cropper, perhaps as a result of his own inability at handling his environment, it will be because he is going to learn to handle himself and his fellows with equal efficiency. This is the great problem of human engineering which is now looming big upon the horizon and which must be tackled successfully if man's progress is not to be seriously hampered. We must learn to adjust the individual and his job, whatever it may be and whatever the individual may be, as efficiently as the combustion engineer can adjust the coal and the furnace. Dr. Richmond's book is a message to the people, calculated to clear away the obscurities that surround the problems of the young adolescent girl and to point the direction in which progress must be made and the

obstacles that lie in its path. In these days no educated persons can undertake to rear or train children without appreciating that much water has gone under the bridge since our grandparents raised theirs, and it is their simple and obvious duty to make some effort to acquaint themselves with the main facts that have been learned in this field. To such is the book addressed.

WILLIAM A. WHITE

St. Elizabeth's Hospital,  
Washington, D. C.,  
January 18, 1925.

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# THE ADOLESCENT GIRL

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## CHAPTER I

### THE ADOLESCENT GIRL IN EARLIER TIMES

Primitive peoples were in many respects far wiser than we in their treatment of adolescence. Most of them placed a profound religious and social stress upon puberty. It was one of the great crises in the life of primitive man; many tribes looked upon it as a sort of rebirth of the individual, when he took upon himself another personality, and ceremonies of rebirth or of resurrection, with a renaming of the boy or girl, occurred among widely scattered peoples. It was the time when the child not only put away childish things and took upon himself the duties and privileges of adulthood, but when he was formally inducted into the life of the tribe, became a full-fledged member of the community and partaker of the common life. Puberty observances were more common in the case of the boy than of the girl, but there were many tribes among which both sexes were required to pass initiations, and ordeals and elaborate

ritual and ceremonial accompanied the child's assumption of social maturity.

A period of seclusion at the time of the girl's first menstruation is quite common; usually this period is one of a few days, but among some tribes it is a period of years, one, three, or even ten. Those tribes which prolong the period of seclusion usually make of it a time of training and instruction. Among the Indians of British Columbia the girl undergoes a strenuous period of training, lasting from one to four years. During this time she lives in a small lodge apart from her people, having with her an attendant who looks after her physical needs and serves also as guardian and instructor. The girl can eat only certain foods, she must sleep but little, she roams the mountains at night, testing her endurance in various ways, and always seeking contact with the spiritual influences to which she is supposed to be specially near. Meanwhile she perfects herself in all the female arts of her people, and is instructed by the attendant in the lore of the tribe, so that when she returns to it she is ready for entrance into the responsibilities of life, religious and secular, both as they pertain to herself and to the tribe as a whole.

The belief in the acquisition of a guardian spirit, or of communion with a deity, is very widespread, and fasts and vigils are engaged in to insure such com-

munion. Trances, visions, and dreams bring about a union with spiritual forces, and the girl's whole life is supposed to be shaped, and indeed may be, by her spiritual experiences at this time. Sometimes evil spirits are supposed to be hovering near, or to be causing the phenomenon of menstruation, and elaborate ceremonies are employed to banish them.

Sometimes the girl undergoes severe treatment in the effort to make of her a worthy member of the tribe. She is beaten, she must perform strenuous labor, she must fast or go without sleep till near exhaustion, she is roasted or buried in sand, she is the object of reviling and satire, to which she must reply in kind; if she winces or shows signs of cowardice during the ordeal she is expelled from the tribe by the women. Sometimes there are ceremonial floggings, to prevent laziness or to drive away evil spirits. In other tribes, instead of the imposition of taboos, restrictions, and limitations, the advent of puberty is the signal for their removal. The girl may now leave home, go on long journeys, or even be given complete freedom to conduct herself as she pleases.

Sex instruction forms an important phase of nearly all puberty rites and ceremonials. The girl is taught by her mother, or by older women, is admitted to the women's clubhouse or secret society, and is there initiated into physical and religious mysteries. Her

rôle as maiden or wife, the mysteries of childbirth, and the care of children are explained to her. Often circumcision or infibulation is employed, and the girl is tattooed or adorned in various ways to make her attractive to the opposite sex. Among all primitive peoples marriage takes place soon after puberty, or even before. Some tribes guard the girl very closely, and her marriage is arranged for by her parents; at the opposite extreme we find those who permit complete freedom, intercourse being looked upon as a prerequisite to marriage.

A description of the puberty ceremony of an African tribe as it is still conducted is found in a recent book. With the tribe assembled in holiday mood, the youths and maidens who had been in seclusion for two months approached, dancing, naked, wild-eyed, their hair close-shorn, their bodies whitened with ashes and manioc. They accompanied their leaps and bounds with words, nasal or guttural, of the Samali, the sacred language. An old man took his station before the group of boys, and an old woman before the girls, and the ceremony began. After the mummeries and dances by first the children, then the women, then the men, dances which tested their endurance and during which emotions (assisted by fermented millet) were wrought to the highest pitch, the two old people spoke:



“For one moon, for two moons, you have concealed yourselves in the depths of the woods. You have fasted and afflicted yourselves.

“For one moon and another moon you have hidden yourselves away from profane eyes, you have whitened your bodies so that death shall not carry them off to his village.

“You have spoken the sacred language and none other. You have lived off roots and herbs, far from the eyes of the profane.

“For one moon and another moon you have slept no matter where—no matter where and no matter how. You have abstained from laughter and from joy.

“N’Gakoura is well content with you. Your trial is over. You may enjoy yourselves. You may laugh, dance, live in the open, speak, and sleep on your bogbos.

“You will soon be men. You will soon be women. In a little while you will undergo ga’nza.

“Your trial is over. You may enjoy yourselves. You may laugh and dance.”

The candidates were then circumcised, the boys by the old men, the girls by the old women, and when this ceremony was complete, the multitude chanted—

“Ga’nza . . . ga’nza . . . ga’nza . . . ga’nza!

A man is ga’nza, a woman too,

But once in life.

You are one of us now, men!

You are one of us, women!

Now you are ga’nzas.

Ga’nza . . . ga’nza . . . ga’nza . . . ga’nza!<sup>1</sup>

As conditions of life grew easier and the tribe increased in numbers, it was the children of chiefs

<sup>1</sup>*Batoula*, by René Maran, Chap. V, pp. 93–110. The scene is in the French Congo. As described by the author it is a peculiarly savage spectacle, the excesses of which are heightened by the native’s hatred of the white man and their fear of his destruction of their tribal rights and customs.

and wealthier members only who underwent the full ceremony. Among the poor the ceremony was much shortened and in some tribes came to be omitted altogether. But in general we find primitive peoples paying a vast amount of attention to adolescence, recognizing it as a time of emotional stress and the period when religious and patriotic fervor is most easily aroused, and group loyalty strengthened. Among the higher tribes not only is the girl's individuality given a chance to assert itself but she is brought into close relationship with the life of the tribe, grounded in its traditions and ideals, and made conscious of herself as a vital unit in the group, whose welfare she must henceforth guard more closely than her own.

Though among primitive peoples the adolescent girl occupies a position of considerable importance, when we come to historical times we seek her largely in vain. The glimpses of her that history affords are rare and fleeting, and tell us little of her everyday life or of her preparation for womanhood. The story of the position and treatment of women in historical times is a harrowing one, and can give us little but negative help in the solution of our present-day problems. Throughout all history, with practically no exceptions, woman has been a slave and a chattel, the property first of her father and then of her hus-

band, even, as in China, under the control of her mother-in-law. The lands where she could rise to positions of dignity and power were few, and few were the women who did so rise. To satisfy the desires of man, to tend his comfort and minister to his needs, to delight his senses with her beauty and grace, to bear and rear him a family that his name might be perpetuated—such has been the conception of woman's place in the scheme of things from the dawn of history. This does not necessarily mean that she was mistreated; there were many instances where she was held in affection and esteem, and where her lot was by no means hard, but these privileges were never hers by right—only through the sufferance of her masculine relatives; in nearly all countries, law and custom made her subject to the will of the man.

There is considerable evidence, however, that in very ancient times, in some countries at least, there was a period when woman was, socially and economically, the equal if not the superior of man. This period is known to students of society as the "matriarchate" or the period of rule by the mothers. This system of society seems to have been fairly well developed at one time among the Iroquois Indians; women were chiefs or chose the chieftains, children were known by their mothers' names, and property descended through the daughters instead of through

the sons. A recent book<sup>1</sup> seeks to prove that the matriarchate or the dominance of women was far more universal than is generally believed, and to explain some obscure ancient or primitive customs by it. It may be that, upon further research, we shall find this to have been the case; at present, however, we search history in vain for a recognition of woman as the equal of man, entitled to develop her individuality and to pursue her own ends with the singleness of purpose universally accorded the male.<sup>2</sup>

At birth the chances of survival were far fewer for the girl than for the boy. Infanticide was universal in the ancient world, when famine was frequent and the population must not exceed the ability of the land to support it, and girl babies were the most frequently sacrificed to the gods of necessity. Add to the low esteem in which women were held the fact that the male population was held in check by the exigencies of war and hunting, and we see what to the savage mind was sufficient reason for the putting to death of girl babies. But what at first may have been a matter of necessity came in time to be sanctioned by custom or religion, and we find the most highly developed people of ancient times—the

<sup>1</sup>*The Dominant Sex*, by Mathilde and Matthias Vaerting.

<sup>2</sup>The authors of *The Dominant Sex* declare that history, having been written by men, has misinterpreted the evidence of the dominance of women, or even deliberately suppressed it.

Greeks—getting rid of undesired children by exposure or other means. Though the Greeks exposed both boys and girls, we know from various laws and decrees, as well as from legends and drama, that girl babies were far less desirable to them than boys.

The same was true of the Romans. In the beginning of Roman history we find the legendary Romulus pledging his people to bring up all males except those who were born lame or monsters but only the first-born of the females. The plays of Plautus and Terence show us that the custom of exposing children still survived in the days of the Republic. The first emperor, Augustus, put a premium upon legitimate children by providing that only married people with children were entitled to their full inheritance, and granting relief from all personal taxes and burdens to citizens having three or more children. Augustus himself, however, exposed the child of his granddaughter. It was not until 374 A.D. that an imperial edict declared that whoever should expose his children should be subject to punishment.

Whatever may be said of the attitude of the early Church toward women, there is no gainsaying the fact that it inveighed from the beginning against the murder of children, and that it must be given credit for considerable influence in the destruction of the

customs of infanticide in Europe. In Oriental countries, where the pressure of population is great, the killing of infants, and especially of girl babies, has continued even down to our own times. The English government struggled with it in India for nearly a hundred years, while, if we can trust the testimony of travellers, it still exists in remote districts in Asiatic countries.

Once permitted to survive, we hear little more of the female child. Sparta alone of all the ancient world seems to have regarded her training as of any importance; there we see her undergoing practically the same training as her brothers, mingling freely with them in plays and competitive games, her life shaped by the same ideals of subservience and loyalty to the State. The Spartans strove for physical perfection in their women, that they might become the mothers of superior men. There was apparently no thought of developing the girl's own individuality.<sup>1</sup>

In Athens woman was a lower being, and we hear nothing of the girls of the better classes. They were closely guarded till puberty, legitimately married, and lost sight of. The women who did play a prominent

<sup>1</sup>The authors of *The Dominant Sex* claim that Sparta was a Woman's State, and that the sexes were on practically an equal footing in all matters. They thus account for the fact that the Spartan girl received the same type of education and training as did the boy.

part in Greek life were the *Hetairai*—stranger women—who were not citizens and therefore not subject to the disabilities of the Athenian women. They could not marry citizens, but they could become their “companions” and as such exercised considerable influence upon the life of the times. Prostitution and extramarital relationships were no offense to the ethical sense of the Greeks, and though they guarded their wives very closely that they might be sure of the paternity of the children, irregular sex-relationships were otherwise the rule.

In Roman history there are a number of famous women, but of their girlhood we know nothing. With the decay of the ancient world and the growing ascendancy of the Church it might be supposed that a softened attitude toward women would have arisen, but such cannot be said to have been the case. The early Church had a hard struggle with the licentiousness of its convert peoples, and woman became the epitome of sin and the symbol of man’s fall from Paradise. In the sixth century, A.D., the Council of Macon hotly debated as to whether or not she had a soul, and granted her one by the narrow margin of one vote. With such an attitude toward the sex in general it is not to be wondered at that history is silent about the adolescent girl for over a thousand years.

During the Renaissance women shared in the new learning and the new attitude toward life, and all over Europe we find girls receiving an education and plunging boldly into life in a hitherto unheard-of fashion. Teachers arose, Vives in Spain, Erasmus in England, Dulce in Italy, who turned out prodigies of learning in their girl pupils. Mary Stuart delivering a Latin oration in public at the age of thirteen, Queen Elizabeth translating Margaret of France's *Mirror of a Sinful Soul* at fourteen, St. Teresa with difficulty restrained from hurrying to Africa to be massacred and "win heaven cheaply" when she was but six, are some of the marvels that confront us. They seem to have been almost crazy to experience and to learn. At thirteen their education was finished and they went forth, says De Maulde, "to the conquest of the world, wearing to admiration the double ornament of fine jewels and a fine intellect, and girlhood became an apprenticeship and marriage began to be put off; young girls attained a perfect independence of mind."<sup>1</sup>

Many of these girls became famous in the religious, social, and political life of the times, but after all, they were a small group, belonging to noble or royal families, and there is no evidence that their "inde-

<sup>1</sup>De Maulde, *Women of the Renaissance*. See reference at the end of chapter.



pendence of mind" became the common possession of their less fortunate sisters.

There are, to be sure, a number of stories and legends clustering about the names of girls throughout the Middle Ages, which show us that, no matter how she was regarded by her contemporaries, the adolescent girl has run true to form in all times. The charity and social vision of St. Elizabeth, the religious fervor of St. Teresa, the flirtations of Louise of Savoy, the love affairs of Mary Stuart show us girls reacting to their social environment just as girls react today. But nowhere in history is there recognition of puberty as a psychological crisis, or of the adolescent girl as an individual with needs and rights of her own. Everywhere is the tacit assumption that woman as an individual is subordinate to the needs of the race.

It must be remembered that in all races and at all times the age of a girl at marriage was much below what it is in Western nations at present. In primitive times girls were bargained for, betrothed, or even married in infancy. The custom of child marriages still exists in India. Plato thought eighteen to twenty the proper age for a girl to marry, but he was discussing an ideal society and Greek girls as a rule married much earlier. During the Middle Ages thirteen or fourteen was thought not too early for

marriage, and in Colonial New England Higginson could write of an "ancient maid of 25." Thus during most of what we term her adolescence the girl was occupied with the cares of household and children. Those who escaped marriage found refuge in convents or nunneries, or in earlier times remained the wards of their male relatives. Then, too, many girls were needed to recruit the army of prostitutes who throughout historical times have formed an important part of the social whole.

In the far beginning prostitution was not looked upon as a social vice. It even had the sanction of religion, and girls regularly offered up their virginity as a sacrifice to a deity. Among widely scattered peoples we find the custom of bringing a young girl to the temple where she was deflowered by instruments. Later the priest himself performed this service, for such it was considered, and the grateful parents or bridegroom rewarded him with gifts or other payment. Out of this, perhaps, grew the custom of temple prostitution, where girls served for a stated time in the temples, or were required to present themselves at certain times to satisfy the needs of the priests. When monogamous marriages became the rule, prostitution became fixed as an institution, and as such has flourished ever since. Among some primitive peoples, as we have seen, equal license was

allowed girls and boys, but very early the ideal of the woman's faithfulness to her husband became fixed. This was necessary where inheritance was through the male. The ideal of the girl's chastity till marriage was a much later growth, and was enforced not only by the man's desire for a virgin, but by the unwillingness of the older women to accord the girl privileges denied to themselves. The ideals of masculine chastity and of faithfulness in marriage, however, have obtained nowhere except in limited groups, mostly philosophical or religious, within historical times. Concubine, mistress, and prostitute have existed side by side with the legitimate wife from time immemorial. There have been nations, as the Japanese, among whom girls were selected and trained for prostitution as they might have been for any other profession, and where they were held in high esteem; the Hetairai were the only cultured and educated women in Greece; but more and more the natural jealousy of the legitimate wife operated to drive the institution under cover, and to make of it the despised and fearful thing that it is today.

Thus we find that history can give us very little help in the specific problems of adolescence. We must turn to myth and folklore for the modicum of wisdom that the race has attained in an understanding

of the psychology of girlhood. Cinderella, true to ancient social customs the slave of her stepmother, daydreaming amidst the ashes till the dreams became real; Jephtha's daughter, bewailing with her maidens on the mountains the fact that she must die a virgin, with life and love untasted; the Trojan Helen, who at the age of twelve, intrigued the god-like Hercules, and for whose favors men waged years of warfare; the women of the Arthurian legends, Enid the good, Elaine the lily maid, the wily Vivien, and all the other legendary maidens of the golden age of chivalry; and loveliest and most tragic story of all, the Maid of Orleans, led by her voices to save her king and country, and rewarded by a cruel and superstitious age with martyrdom—these stories and countless others, in the folklore of every nation, show us girlhood eager, expectant, filled with the consciousness of a high destiny, blindly submissive to mysterious forces of whose nature the girl herself is but vaguely aware. Always driven on toward unseen ends and purposes, struggle as she may for the possession of her soul, she is the child of destiny and sooner or later must suffer the pains and pay the penalties of womanhood; the preoccupation of folklore with girlhood is not with the girl as an individual, but as the high priestess of nature, whose holy fire she must guard for good or evil to herself.

The customs of primitive peoples, authentic history, myth, and folklore—these are our sources of information concerning racial experience with girlhood, and they do not serve to take us very far. They show us the girl as she was molded and influenced by the customs and beliefs of her race and time, but tell us little of her original nature. Just how much influence her long racial history has had upon the girl of today we do not know. There are interesting parallels between certain types of adolescent behavior and the customs of primitive society; but they may be no more than parallels. Puberty has been a physiological crisis since man became man, and it has its analogues far down in the animal kingdom; but only very recently has social adolescence been extended to cover the full physiological period of development. This is especially true in the case of the girl. She was ready for childbearing at puberty, and her youth, so far as it concerned herself and her chance for psychological development, was over. The adolescent girl as we know her is a newcomer on the stage of history.

The last half century, which has witnessed the movements for the rights of women and children, with their far-reaching social and economic consequences, has brought her into a prominence which she has never before enjoyed. Her ideas and opinions,

her education, her activities, social, economic, and even political, have become matters of grave importance, objects of study and analysis and subjects for endless controversy. The newer developments in psychology, especially the psychoanalytic school and educational psychology, have given us methods for the investigation of her mental and emotional life, while medicine and sociology have pushed forward our knowledge of her to a point undreamed of a few decades ago. Though much remains to be learned, we are already in possession of a sizable body of knowledge concerning girlhood, at least in its physical and psychological aspects. The application of that knowledge lags far behind.

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## CHAPTER II

### PUBERTY: WHAT IT IS AND WHAT IT MEANS

Puberty in both sexes marks the beginning of physiological maturity. It is the time when the reproductive system is ready to function. In the girl its accomplishment is marked by the striking phenomenon of menstruation, though for some time before the appearance of the first menstrual flow there are physical signs pointing to her coming maturity. The growth of the body, which has proceeded rather slowly for several years, is now greatly accelerated, often seeming to make a sudden spurt, so that the girl adds inches to her stature in the space of a few months. The breasts begin to develop, the nipples enlarge, hair appears under the arms and around the external organs of reproduction, the width of the pelvis increases, and the angularity of childhood is replaced by the rounded curves of girlhood.

No factor in the physical life of woman has been invested with so much mystery and become the object of so much superstition as the function of menstruation. There is nothing in man's experience



comparable to it, and it forms no small part of the mysterious attraction which woman has always had for him. The search for its cause has extended from primitive times down to our own day, and there is even yet no general agreement as to its meaning.

Among primitive theories of menstruation we quite frequently find the belief that the girl is bitten by a snake, lizard, crocodile, or a sacred bird. It is looked upon as a wound. Another theory is that evil spirits have intercourse with the girl and cause a wound each month. The people of the Torres Straits believe that the moon, in the shape of a man, embraces the girl and causes menstruation. Thus the first menstruation is looked upon as a marriage, and among people who hold this theory the girl must be married before puberty, or have intercourse, else she loses caste. The belief that the moon has something to do with menstruation is still held by many people even in this scientific age, and indeed it may be, as suggested by G. Stanley Hall, an old biological rhythm, comparable to the diurnal and seasonal rhythms which have been shown to exist in man at least, and probably in other animals. Miriam Van Waters, in a study of the adolescent girl among primitive peoples, finds an explanation of the function that has both social and economic features given by the Shuswap Indians: "Formerly the men

menstruated and not the women. When Coyote was working in the world putting things to rights, he considered this matter, and said to himself, 'it is not right that men should menstruate, it is very inconvenient for they do all the hunting and most of the traveling. Women stay at home more, and therefore, it will be better if they menstruate and not the men.' Whereupon he took some of the menstrual fluid from men and threw it upon the women saying, 'Henceforth woman shall menstruate and not man.'"<sup>1</sup>

The most common attitude of primitive society toward the menstruating woman was that of aversion. In some tribes she must secrete herself as long as the flow continues, in others she warns people of her condition by crying, "Unclean! Unclean!" if they approach within a certain distance. Often anything that she touched was unclean also and another person handling it would suffer or even die. Frazer tells a story of an Australian whose wife slept on his blanket during her period, who killed her and himself died of terror within a fortnight. These people believe that if a man sees a girl during the seclusion following her first menstruation he will die, and the girl is put to death if she allows herself to be seen. A somewhat similar idea was held by the Shoshone Indians. Almost universally sex relations are for-

<sup>1</sup>*The Adolescent Girl among Primitive Peoples*, page 11.

period between the menses, its exact date varying in different women, and that it may occur without menstruation is proven by the fact that women not infrequently become pregnant when not menstruating, as after the birth of a child, and there are authentic instances of women who have never menstruated and yet have borne children. However, menstruation cannot occur without a preceding ovulation. It is probable that during the child-bearing period the ovaries give off an internal secretion which is carried by the bloodstream and in some way influences the activity of the uterus, which results in an extra supply of blood being furnished it. Further than this our present knowledge as to the meaning of menstruation does not extend.

The age at which the menses appear varies greatly in different girls; race and climate have been thought to exert an influence upon it, but the most recent studies fail to confirm this view. Among 10,000 cases of American-born girls (United States and Canada) a recent investigator<sup>1</sup> found the average age of the first menstruation to be 13.9 years, while in the corresponding temperate zone in Europe it is 15.5 years. In this country occasionally a girl of 9.5 experiences her first menstruation, but it is not uncommon to

<sup>1</sup>ENGELMAN, DR. GEORGE J., quoted by Novak, page 103.

find it delayed till 17 or 18; below 9 in this country it is so rare as to be considered abnormal.

The length of the monthly cycle and the duration of the menstrual flow are also subject to great individual variation. The most common interval between periods is twenty-eight days, though the three-week period is found rather frequently and a few women menstruate normally every fourteen days. In some the normal interval extends as far as thirty-five days. The duration of the period varies in different cases from one to six days, though Kelly,<sup>1</sup> who made a careful investigation of one thousand cases, concludes that "more than six days is so frequently pathologic that it should never be regarded as normal, unless it is clear from other data that the patient's health is fully up to par."

In the amount of blood lost during the period every woman is a law unto herself. What is normal in one is abnormal in another. In cold climates the flow is usually scant, and among the Eskimo women it is often absent altogether in winter; but whether this is due to the cold or to some other factor is not known.

Girls vary greatly in the length of the time it takes for the function to become stabilized. In some it is regular and its characteristics much the same from the beginning; in others it may be subject to irregu-

<sup>1</sup>Quoted by Novak, page 89.

larities for several years. Months may elapse between periods, or the first menstruation may appear and the second be delayed for a year or two or even longer.

Much has been written and is popularly believed about the great effect of the function upon the feminine organism. Women have been said to live their lives in cycles, their mental and muscular efficiency and their moral perceptions depending upon their proximity to the menstrual period. It has only recently been disputed that temperature, pulse rate, and blood pressure were affected during menstruation; the most carefully controlled studies have failed to show this to be a fact. Neither is there any loss of mental or motor efficiency in normal women, nor any regularly recurring periods of maximum efficiency within each month. It is usually asserted in institutions for mental diseases that insane and epileptic patients are more disturbed during their periods. This rests, however, upon observation only; the writer knows of no carefully controlled studies upon the subject.

A great many girls do, however, suffer much discomfort and actual pain at their menstrual periods, and are incapacitated for a longer or shorter time. There is headache, great weariness and fatigue, a feeling of lassitude or nervousness, the breasts are

sore or painful, the irritability of the bladder is increased, the bowels are loose or an actual diarrhoea may be present; in other cases there is constipation. Some girls suffer acute pain for several hours before the flow begins or during the first day. These pains, because of their spasmodic nature, are very comparable to labor pains. The cause of *dysmenorrhoea*, or painful menstruation, is often very obscure. Sometimes there are malformations or anomalies of development, and sometimes actual disease of the reproductive system. There are other cases in which the dysmenorrhoea would seem to be due to some lack of balance in the endocrine system (the glands of internal secretion) as it is successfully treated by the administration of glandular extracts. But oftener than not no definite cause for painful menstruation can be discovered. Dr. Clelia Mosher, who studied 800 women during 6000 or more menstrual periods, decides that in such cases dysmenorrhoea is due to "wrong breathing and lack of development of the abdominal muscles,"—she made her observations during the era of tight corsets—"the upright position, inactivity during the period, and psychic influences."<sup>1</sup> The ease with which functional dysmenorrhoea yields to suggestion, psychoanalysis,

<sup>1</sup>MOSHER, CLELIA, *Health and the Woman Movement*, page 14.

and other forms of mental therapy would suggest that the last point is the most important.

Menstruation may cease for a longer or shorter period after it has once been established. This occurs in several cases of the acute infectious diseases, such as measles, typhoid fever, diphtheria, and so on; and in certain constitutional diseases, such as tuberculosis, chlorosis and other anemic conditions, diabetes, and chronic kidney disease; it sometimes happens as the result of emotional disturbances, such as a severe fright or shock; prolonged mental strain is sometimes a factor, and change of climate appears very important; girls who go away to school or college, who take up nurses' training or otherwise change their manner of living, not infrequently cease to menstruate, sometimes for long periods of time. When this occurs the girl is apt to gain in weight, and may, and usually does, feel perfectly well. Pregnancy is, of course, the most frequent cause of the cessation of menstruation, but cessation occurs so frequently from other causes that even in dealing with delinquent girls it is unwise to jump at conclusions.

It is astonishing what a vast body of ignorance and superstition still adheres to this universal function of womankind. Mothers whose own menstrual

histories have been uneventful, fall back upon tradition and old wives' tales in teaching their daughters. The writer recalls one mother who wrote to her daughter in boarding school that "the flow should last for seven days and the feet should not be put in water during that time," and she added, "pay no attention to what your teacher (of physiology) says; mother knows."

The chief thing to be kept in mind is the great variation among girls in regard to this function, and this applies to its hygiene as well. Certainly all girls should bathe during their periods, at least as frequently as usual, and a local bath with a change of napkins morning and night, and once at least during the day if possible, is no more than ordinary cleanliness. Some girls continue their cold tub or shower, sea bathing or even swimming, with no noticeable effects; others are more comfortable after a sponge bath with warm water. As regards exercise, the strongly built girl finds that her period makes little difference; she can dance, do gymnasium work, play games or run a machine as well as at other times. But her sister, with long limbs and short body and a general tendency to *viscéroptosis* or sagging of the abdominal organs, is apt to suffer if she is compelled to stand for any length of time or engage in vigorous exercise. Each girl must find out for herself what is



best suited to her. There is no need for a normal, healthy girl to suffer much pain or discomfort during her menstrual period. If she is influenced by the traditional attitude and regards herself as "sick" or "unwell," she is very apt to be so. It is only too possible to exaggerate slight symptoms into actual severity by fixing attention upon them. Let the girl order her life as usual, keep herself clean and comfortable, correct any tendency to constipation, and pay no more attention to the matter. More or less discomfort at some time during the period, some headache, a feeling of lassitude, slight depression or irritability, is very common and is no cause for alarm. And even these symptoms are apt to disappear when one ceases to expect them.

If a girl suffers severely from dysmenorrhoea, she should be taken to a competent physician. She should never be dosed with whiskey or drugs, which only camouflage the symptoms and do nothing to remove their cause. If the cause is found to be anatomical, it is sometimes removed by surgical procedure, though operations to remove anomalies in the reproductive system are not as frequent as formerly; the trouble often returns, necessitating further attention. In a certain percentage of cases operations or treatment of the nose produces the desired effect; there seems to be some connection,

not well understood, between the nose and the reproductive system. But often no definite cause can be made out and the dysmenorrhoea is diagnosed as "functional." If the girl is of hysterical make-up, it may be considered as an expression of the underlying nervous defect, and expected to disappear if the nervous health be improved.

It must be borne in mind that though puberty marks the beginning of physiological maturity, developmental changes are not complete for a considerable time thereafter. A child's body is a very different thing from an adult's; not only are its proportions different, but there are differences in its chemical composition as well. Throughout childhood and adolescence change, growth, and development go on at different rates in different organs and systems and are greater or less at different periods; often the girl seems to have reached her full physical development when the changes in internal organs are by no means complete. Even the skeletal system continues quite plastic, and defects in it are caused or cured comparatively easily. The heart does not reach its adult size and shape till late adolescence and up to that time is small compared to the arteries; there is a great increase in blood pressure at puberty, as well as changes in the composition of the blood. The lung capacity increases rapidly during

adolescence, and more slowly thereafter for several years; the uterus begins at puberty a process of development which is not complete till about the twentieth year. Though the growth of the brain ceases at the age of about fourteen, cellular development, upon which mental development depends, is not complete, and continues for a number of years. Very marked also are the pubertal changes in the glandular system; the thyroid enlarges and its secretion is increased; the sex glands—the ovaries and gonads—begin to function; other glands active in childhood decrease their activity, and for several years a condition of general instability supervenes. We might expect this to mean increased susceptibility to disease, but statistics do not bear out such expectation. On the contrary, there is evidence that periods of accelerated growth such as occur at puberty are periods of increased vitality and power to resist disease. “Growth itself,” says Dr. Burnham,<sup>1</sup> “is a condition of health.”

The one disease of puberty which occurs only in girls is *chlorosis* or “green sickness.” This is a form of anemia which has its onset between the fourteenth and seventeenth years, and is most common among girls of the poorer classes, especially in the cities;

<sup>1</sup>BURNHAM, WM. H., *The Hygiene of the School Child*, lectures delivered at Clark University, 1914–1915.

it rarely occurs in country-bred girls. There is a peculiar yellow-green tinge to the complexion, which has given the disease its popular name. The girl complains of breathlessness and palpitation of the heart, and there may be a tendency to fainting. The appetite is capricious, and often there is a longing for unusual foods, especially acids, and even for wholly indigestible things, such as chalk or earth. Nervous and hysterical symptoms are so frequent that some authorities regard the disease as of nervous origin. Fortunately, it is one of the few diseases for which a specific remedy has been discovered, and it yields rather easily to treatment. Though rest, good food, and air are important adjuncts they will not alone correct the deficiency in the blood, and the girl in whom chlorosis is suspected should always be under the care of a competent physician.

We have said that the thyroid gland enlarges at puberty, often at the onset of menstruation. The thyroid is situated in the neck, and it is its enlargement that produces the fullness of neck so often seen in young girls. In the majority of cases the enlargement disappears as the girl grows older; when it persists and becomes chronic the condition is known as goitre. The tendency to goitre diminishes after the twentieth year, and it occurs much more frequently in females than in males. There are certain districts

of the United States and Canada, as in England and on the Continent, where the disease is very prevalent. The region of the Great Lakes is such a district in this country. In the States bordering on the Lakes goitre is very common. As long as the swelling is small, it causes no inconvenience, and it may disappear without medical treatment, or upon the girl's removal to a nongoitrous district. When the gland is large it usually causes pressure symptoms and great discomfort, and is often removed by surgical means. Investigations have shown that the cause of goitre is connected with the water supply, and Osler recommends that in goitrous districts the drinking water be boiled. Extensive experiments have been in progress in the schools of some mid-western cities for several years, which seem to show that the development of goitre can be prevented by the use of a simple remedy, and perhaps control of the disfiguring condition is near at hand.

One of the most distressing and frequent of physical disorders, *migraine* or "sick headache," usually makes its appearance in girls at puberty, and though both sexes are subject to migraine, it occurs more often in females. Frequently it is an invariable accompaniment to menstruation. There is a "boring pain, back of the eyes," or "through the temples," though confined to one side of the head; light cannot

be borne, noises and jars become intolerable. The victim may endure a deadly nausea for which there is no relief, or vomiting may afford a temporary respite. There may be great lassitude and weakness, the condition lasting from one day to three or even more. All sorts of remedies have been tried, some of which give temporary relief, but have no effect upon the further course of the disease. Its cause has baffled medical science until very recently; the X-ray has shown us that in many cases the culprit is probably the pituitary gland, a small body lying in a cavity of the skull directly back of the bridge of the nose. This gland in the course of its function is given to enlargement; it swells at each menstruation and at other times when it is called upon to increase its output; if the bony cavity in which it is contained is small the swollen gland presses against it, thus causing the excruciating pain. The nausea is a reflex, and probably due to the stimulation of certain nerves that are connected with the stomach. The repeated swelling of the gland and its pressure against the sides of the bony cavity tends to wear away the bone and enlarge the cavity, so that as the victim grows older the headaches become less severe, and may cease altogether. When the menstrual function ceases and the gland is no longer called upon to do extra work periodically, the head-

aches cease. There is of course no way of interfering with the bony cavity to enlarge it, and the only effective remedy consists in supplying the body with the elements which are normally supplied by the gland itself, so that it does not need to work so hard to produce them. This is a delicate task and has not yet been completely mastered, but the frequency of attacks has been greatly reduced; as our knowledge extends it may be possible to control them altogether.<sup>1</sup>

Headache tablets, powders, and drugs of any sort, unless taken under the direction of a physician, should be avoided. They do no real good and may do much harm; rest in bed, in a darkened and quiet room, is the treatment indicated during the attack. The nonmigrainous headaches to which adolescent girls, and many older women, are subject—the type known as “nervous headaches”—are often unnecessary. If the girl is in good physical health, they are to be regarded as physical expressions of mental or emotional states and tend to disappear when the mental conflicts are adjusted.

*Chorea*, or St. Vitus' Dance, is a disease comparatively frequent among girls near the onset of puberty. Acute chorea affects chiefly children, being

<sup>1</sup>My authority for the statements concerning the cause of migraine and its remedy is Dr. Walter Timme of New York City.

most common between the ages of five and fifteen. High-strung, nervous, excitable children are specially liable to it. Anything that puts an extra strain upon the organism—and puberty is such a strain—overstimulation, fear, and worry, are likely to cause an explosion in girls of the nervous type. Sometimes the onset of the disease is not recognized and the girl is scolded for her restlessness and lack of self-control. She is fidgety, cross, and irritable, cries easily, or flies into a rage at nothing. Such symptoms are always danger signals, and call for understanding treatment. Rest, quiet, and seclusion, separation from other children, and removal from all sources of irritation are imperative measures. Parents of nervous children are so often themselves nervous that a choreic girl is usually better off if treated away from her family. The physician can do little for her if rest and freedom from worry and irritating conditions cannot be obtained. The disease usually yields rather easily to such hygienic treatment, but recurrences are quite frequent, and the girl should be protected from any undue nervous strain and guided in the formation of habits of nervous health.

However, with our increased knowledge of hygiene, more sensible modes of dress, and interest in sports and outdoor activities, puberty as a physiological



crisis engages less and less attention. Certainly in the normal, healthy girl it is little to be feared. It is in the psychological and social aspects that it becomes of grave importance. In our civilization, where marriage is delayed till long past puberty, where economic conditions force thousands of girls, into industry at the beginning of adolescence, and where the increasing freedom of action accorded to women is extended more and more to young girls, we have a situation without precedent in history and one where racial experience is powerless to guide us. We must turn for enlightenment to the girl herself and discover as far as possible what are her mental and emotional characteristics and needs.

We have said that during adolescence the body is in a state of "unstable equilibrium." The changes that are taking place in the vital organs and especially in the glandular system manifest themselves in mental and emotional states, in thoughts and feelings which give to the adolescent period its peculiar character. The restlessness, the changing moods, the flaming enthusiasms, often short-lived, the romantic fancies and the tendency to daydreaming, the self-conceit and self-assertion characteristic of the girl in her teens arise from the deepest recesses of her nature. Adolescence is the heyday of the emotional life, the blossom time of all those feelings

and emotions which depend at bottom upon sex, and in order to understand the emotional development of puberty we must know something of the development of the reproductive or sex instinct.

The development of this instinct and its characteristics in childhood are just beginning to be made clear to us by the researches of the newer schools of psychology. They have shown us how unfounded in fact is our old belief that the child is a sexless creature, living in an idyllic world where sex thoughts, feelings, and activities are unknown, and that they first spring into being at puberty. It is difficult to see how anyone who had any real acquaintance with children ever believed this. But education has done its work so thoroughly for most of us that we fail to see in our children any fundamental instincts at work, and repress their attempts at expression so strongly that we are forever debarred from knowing what is actually going on in their minds.

As a matter of fact, the sex instinct begins to function at birth, and by the time puberty is reached, already has a long history, having passed through a development which is of the utmost importance for future mental and physical health. The child does not, of course, attach the same values to sex that the adult does; it is some time before he learns of its

relation to the birth of children, and he is probably a stranger to the overpowering emotions with which it is connected in the adult. Sex is to him largely a matter of curiosity; as a part of his own body it very early engages his attention, and the differences between the sexes, those between children and adults, the relation of the parents, and whence come the babies, are never-ending sources of interest until, in one way or another, curiosity is satisfied.

Very close observers of children are mostly agreed that there is apt to be a period of masturbatory activity in infancy when the child is learning the control of his body and differentiating it from surrounding objects, though this is probably less often true of girls than of boys; and during the first seven or eight years of life children almost universally engage in some form of sex play with their little mates, touching, looking, and experimenting, impelled by an insatiable curiosity. When punished for these activities, or even without their ever being discovered by their elders, the healthy child in a good environment soon drops these practices and represses them so strongly from his consciousness that he is apt to tell you in after years that they never existed. There then ensues the latent period, when the physical aspects of sex are less engrossing; until the stirrings of puberty again unmistakably direct

attention to them. Definite sex feelings are now experienced in dreams, and the general nervous tension in the reproductive system leads quite naturally to a search for an outlet, which is usually found in masturbation.

The earlier schools of sex hygiene have stressed this fact out of all proportion to its true significance. In itself, and especially if not carried to excess, the masturbation of puberty is a harmless affair, and in girls, certainly, is apt to drop out with the beginning of menstruation, which serves to lessen the sex tension. The normal girl is then apt to forget it, or to remember it with shame as something belonging to an earlier stage of her life, for which she scarcely feels herself responsible. The broadening of interests during adolescence and association with the opposite sex are also outlets for energy and serve to direct attention away from herself into other channels. But the overconscientious girl, or one who is nervously highly organized, may develop a quite disproportionate sense of guilt, and torture herself with attempts at expiation, or shut herself away from normal associations because she feels herself unworthy of marriage and motherhood.

But though the physical manifestation of sex may sink out of sight and remain dormant until puberty, its psychic evolution has an unbroken continuity.

Nature's ultimate aim is the development of a strong enough interest in the opposite sex to prompt the seeking of a mate and the bearing and rearing of children, but there are several stations on the way to this goal, and many never reach it but remain stranded somewhere along the line; or reach it only temporarily and slip back again to an earlier stage of development. By the psychic side of sex we mean the love-life in its widest sense.

In infancy the child is *auto-erotic*, his chief interest is in his own body, he is learning its use and functions, and deriving his ideas of good and bad from the pleasures and pains which he feels in it. Whatever gives him pleasure is good, and conversely, what fails to give him pleasure or results in discomfort of any sort is bad. His wants are few and they are supplied with no more effort on his part than that employed in calling attention to them. From the nature of the case he is at first his own love object, and even his parents are valued in the measure that they contribute to his pleasure and comfort. As he comes more and more in contact with reality his interest—love—is transferred to other objects, though throughout childhood he is intensely egotistic, and his possessions, even his family, are cherished chiefly because they are his rather than from disinterested motives; he is still in love with himself.

This stage of development of the love-life has been called *narcissistic*, after the beautiful youth who fell in love with his own image in a glassy pool.

From this interest in himself the child passes naturally into an interest in those most like himself, that is, persons of his sex. He becomes *homosexual*, having a liking for those of his own sex. Girls now seek chums and develop a spirit of loyalty to each other which was before entirely lacking. Parents are often puzzled and exasperated by the girl's attitude at this period of her development. The home influence seems weakened, she must do what her mates are doing even at the cost of parental disapproval. Unaccountable and sometimes undesirable friendships are formed and stubbornly adhered to. The biological meaning of this phenomenon is clear. It is necessary for the child to get away from its dependence upon the parents and to develop into an independent personality that may later found a family of its own. In this period of chums and common interests the girl first becomes conscious of her kinship with her own sex; feminine interests and ideals dawn upon her; she views her mother in a new light, with much of tenderness and even adoration. If the mother is unworthy or unresponsive, she may transfer her affections to some other older woman into whom she reads all her mother ideals. This

stage of loving one's own sex passes normally into the final or *heterosexual* stage, where, with the coming of full maturity, the search for a mate begins.

The first stage, the auto-erotic period of infancy, usually extends to the fifth or sixth year; the stage of childish narcissism, from thence to the eleventh or twelfth year; and the homosexual stage, to approximately the sixteenth year in girls. (It must be remembered that girls mature on the average about two years earlier than boys). Early adolescence is thus the homosexual stage, which, by the time puberty is fairly established, passes into the normal adult attitude toward the opposite sex.

This is the natural, normal development of the love-life, but in many more cases than are generally known it is interfered with somewhere along the line. An individual may remain auto-erotic and carry into maturity the excessive interest in her own body which normally belongs to infancy. This interest may disguise itself in various ways, as an overfastidiousness in regard to dress or personal belongings, an overscrupulosity concerning order and cleanliness, a stinginess and miserliness, or an invalidism which keeps the girl, even though grown to maturity, almost as much the center of the household and the object of care and solicitude as she was

in infancy. Or when masturbation persists throughout childhood and adolescence as a stubborn habit that resists all ordinary attempts to break it, then almost invariably we have an infantile personality that will never succeed in adjusting itself to the demands of life. Again, development may stop in the narcissistic stage, and self-admiration, vanity, and egotism be the outstanding features of character. Self-interest and self-love, normal and necessary as they are to the child who is establishing her position in the world as an individual, are effective barriers to the broader adjustments necessary to maturity. Or the normal evolution of sex may be stopped in the third period, and the type of love-life known as homosexuality become the only one that is capable of satisfying the individual. Such a girl may look upon normal relations between the sexes as something low and vile, and masculinity be a synonym for coarseness to her. She shuns the society of men and boys and often prefers association with older women. Or she may associate more or less normally with boys, and even marry, but be unable to adjust herself in marriage, and end in illness, life-long unhappiness, or the divorce court.

Probably in few people does the love-life undergo an ideal development. We carry along with us into maturity habits and feelings that normally belong



to earlier stages. Repressions and inhibitions, childish wishes and desires, attachments to unworthy or outworn objects, drag us back and pull us down, preventing the free and full expression of our love interests in maturity, and eventuating for most people in a compromise with life that robs it of the glory and the splendor of which, in our prescient moments, we know it to be capable. But ideal self-development is possible only in an ideal society, and such a state is very far removed from us as yet. We can only, by our efforts to understand and appreciate a normal development, give our children as much of a chance as possible to approximate the ideal.

The girl in whom the love-life has approximated a normal development finds herself at puberty in a new world. Feelings and impulses, the nature of which she does not understand, and which she is usually careful to conceal from her elders, take possession of her; new meanings and values attach themselves to familiar things; she becomes sensitive to things which had not troubled her before, critical of her family, resentful of being treated like a child when she feels herself so far removed from childish things. Almost invariably she feels herself misunderstood and unappreciated, and in this she is not altogether wrong, for no other season of life is so completely forgotten as adolescence, its natural

activities so thoroughly repressed from consciousness, and the traces of its emotional conflicts so carefully stored away.

For most of us, long before middle life is reached, adolescence has become an unknown land, a completely forgotten country, and when our daughters enter it we are as helpless before its mysteries as they. Consequently, when the girl seeks comfort and counsel from her fellow travellers, rather than from those who have weathered the journey, she is following a sound instinct. The attitude of the average adult toward her own adolescence is well illustrated in Lancaster's story of the woman, who, upon hearing a lecture on the typical phases of adolescence, declared that she must have been abnormal for she had never passed through any such experiences; whereupon her mother produced her diary, beginning in the January of her thirteenth year, in which were references and resolutions that proved conclusively that she had passed through almost all the stages described.<sup>1</sup>

Preadolescence, or the period of late childhood, is in many respects more like maturity than it is like earlier childhood or like adolescence. It is a time of slow growth and comparative quiescence. The physical hazards of infancy are past, the acute

<sup>1</sup>Quoted by G. STANLEY HALL in *Youth*, page 145.

stage of teething, over, the child has learned the use and control of her bodily functions, and her orientation in the world of home and school is accomplished. She is more docile and obedient, more suggestible and plastic, than she ever was before or ever will be again. She has a maturity and stability that look deceptively like settled traits of character, and mothers often feel that some strange influence is weaning the child away from her better self when the adolescent ferment begins to work. But throughout this period there are not wanting signs that it is destined to be transient. Progressively the child is extending her interests outside the home, more and more she is drawing away from her infantile dependence upon her parents. But for the most part she is intensely egotistic, selfish to a degree, eager to get and do the things that add to her own enjoyment and aggrandizement. Her daydreams and phantasies, often dramatized in the form of play, reveal her ideals and ambitions—to be rich and admired, to have a great many children, to punish roundly those who have injured her, or to take exquisite vengeance upon parents and playmates for fancied slights. What a thrilling pleasure it is, when one has been sent to bed in punishment for some offense, to fancy the horror and grief of parents upon finding the beloved form of the little daughter stark

in death, with tangled curls spread upon the pillow, the frozen anguish of her face depicting the broken heart from which she died!

A certain type of daydream or phantasy is so common during this period that it would seem almost to serve the purpose of a mental preparation for the actual separation from the family which is to come later. This daydream is known to psychologists as the "foster-child phantasy." The child, perhaps under the stimulus of jealousy of a brother or sister, or feeling herself unjustly punished or deprived of some pleasure, begins to fancy that she is not the child of her parents, that she is a changeling, that her father is not her own father, or that her mother is only a stepmother and bound to her by no tie of blood. Oftener than not she fancies herself a child of wealth or high degree, and may elaborate the situation with all sorts of romantic circumstances. Sometimes this phantasy is carried on for years, varying according to the girl's changing environment, and carefully concealed even from her closest friends. One girl of the writer's acquaintance, who was really an orphan, though living with relatives, carried on such a phantasy at intervals from her twelfth to her seventeenth year, deriving much comfort and courage from her fancied adventures. Another girl who indulged in such a phantasy dur-

ing late childhood, suffered a mental breakdown in her twenties, and in her psychosis relived the childhood daydreams, but now firmly believing that they were true.

As puberty approaches, other fancies begin to appear, some of them deliberately indulged and fostered, such as imagined situations in which boys or men play an important part; the girl pictures herself in romantic scenes with a movie hero, or indulging in fervent love-passages with some boy who has caught her fancy. In her dreams she sees herself beautiful, rich, famous, the cynosure of all eyes, and the recipient of universal praise and admiration. The ideal of herself is moulded upon the heroine of some novel or scenario, or some other girl or woman whom for the time being she admires; she may imagine that she looks like her, identify herself with her, and imitate her in dress, speech, and movement. The boy in imagination performs great deeds, feats of skill and daring, sees himself a great man, a general, a railroad magnate, a Ford or Edison. The girl may imagine herself a great singer or actress, receiving the plaudits of the multitude, or an heiress lavishing her goods upon the poor, a sweet and noble woman whom all honor; but almost invariably the erotic (love) element is present—some boy or man, real or ideal, whom she impresses or dazzles, or

whom, in this imaginative way, she safely tramples under foot. The extent of such phantasies indulged in by girls of junior-high-school age is usually unsuspected by their teachers and parents; Mary is scolded for dawdling over her work, for allowing her wits to go woolgathering instead of applying them to her lessons; Mary herself will tell you that she was thinking this or that, but not for worlds would she allow you a glimpse into the real subject of her thoughts.

In addition to these consciously indulged phantasies, often built up with considerable mental labor, there are others for which the girl does not feel herself responsible, and which are sometimes the source of much anxiety to her. Pictures, words, or ideas suddenly thrust themselves into consciousness, coming apparently from nowhere, having no connection with the subject in hand. Usually they seem to the girl obscene; pictures of sex situations of which she may have no conscious knowledge, obscene and profane words and phrases that shout themselves into her mind, sudden impulses to strip off her clothes or to expose herself, overtaking her in a crowd or other unlikely place. Such fancies are usually fleeting, passing across the mind in a flash, and so vague that they seem like remembered fragments of a dream. Sometimes these fancies are not

fleeting, but become veritable obsessions, haunting the girl until she fears that she is going crazy or that she is desperately wicked. In this case they usually prove to be connected with some bad habit she is trying to overcome, or symbolic of some sex trauma of earlier years. Discussion of the subject with someone who understands and can assure her that it is part of the growing-up process is usually sufficient to lay the ghost, though in cases of the latter type it may take some time to discover the source of the difficulty.

Normally the pubescent girl's fancies are of men and boys, and of herself as the center of attraction and interest. She spends long hours dreaming of how she will act and what she will say in the presence of some idol, and if she actually meets him is apt to be overcome with shyness and find herself tongue-tied. She becomes interested in dress and personal adornment, and her lack of judgment and undeveloped aesthetic taste lead her to glaring incongruities, and to ruin her healthy skin with rouge and lipstick. She slavishly follows the fashion, and nothing is more terrible to her than to be out of step with her crowd. "What the girls are doing" becomes her beacon and guide. The girl who in her early teens is content to be different from other girls, to be conspicuous by her lack of conformity to their

standards in dress and manners, to prefer solitude or association with her elders to chumming with girls of her own age, is the girl who should raise a suspicion of her mental or physical unsoundness or both. For even though in fancy she is trying her wings, feeling her way tentatively into the realm of sex, yet she is still actually in the homosexual stage and this slavish devotion to the standards of the group, this fellowship with those of her own kind, is a very necessary period in the development of her mental and emotional life.

But this period has its great dangers, from the standpoint of our society. The physical instinct of sex is awake and tormenting the girl in dreams or with vague feelings of stress and tension the origin of which she does not understand. Sex curiosity is aroused, and she must know. In some way or other she gets information, too often by subterranean channels that leave an indelible stain upon her soul. The number of pubescent girls who try out some form of sex relations with each other or with boys is far greater than we like to believe. Of the two, sex play with boys is far less harmful from the psychological standpoint, since union with the opposite sex is the normal course of events in maturity, and prolonged intimacy of one girl with another or with different girls may result in a lifelong inability to make a nor-



mal sexual adjustment. When girls are restrained by feelings of modesty or other sentiments from personal contact with each other or with boys, they resort to information from servants, from other girls, from books of information, which are, alas! so few and unsatisfactory; even to peeping and spying. Only a complete airing of the whole subject, a knowledge which seems to her complete, can satisfy the curiosity natural to the early teens. How often the girl is left with a half-knowledge, or with a perversion that warps her whole nature, is known only to the psychiatrist or to the physician who specializes in nervous and mental diseases.

Thus, all the vagaries of young girls which are so trying to their elders, their extravagancies of dress, their high-pitched voices, their giggling and simpering, their emotional instability and changes of mood, their defiance of authority and disrespect for age and experience, their boldness and self-assertiveness, are part of the age-old process of growing up. If these qualities are more in evidence than they were a generation or so ago, it is not due to any fundamental change in the girl herself, but because restraint is less and she has more opportunity to indulge her natural feelings. Age and authority raise barriers which at all costs she must vault. Nothing could be more unwise than the attempt at this period

to thwart the girl's developing independence and keep her still a child. The parents who attempt forcibly to restrain her, who upbraid her for her indifference to their wishes or gibe at her efforts to assert her own personality only succeed in confirming her opinion of their inability to understand and in widening the breach which must inevitably separate one generation from another. The mother who is too sweet and loving, indulging the child's every whim and ruling her by appeals to her love and sympathy for her, does no better. She is fettering her none the less, even though with silken cords. It is difficult enough for any girl to break the bonds of childhood, and we may make it impossible, so that nervous invalidism or life-long failure to assume the responsibilities of maturity may result. If at this period the mother is patient and uncritical, willing to put herself and her claims in the background, she will usually be rewarded by the girl's confidence, and will find in a few years that, though she has lost the little daughter whose loving dependence was so dear to her, she has gained the undying friendship of another woman.

It is during the latter part of the homosexual period that the father begins to play a new rôle in the girl's life. In infancy he is to her the greatest man in the world, the source of all power and authority. As she

grows into childhood he still stands to her as a symbol of authority, a person of consequence, who can grant or refuse favors at his own sweet will, but he does not occupy the place in her thoughts that her mother does. But at puberty she discovers traits and habits in him that she had not noticed before; she is interested in his standing in the community and his business relations, she may consciously idolize him and seek his companionship, or she may devote her energies to getting out of him what she desires. In any case, as the man nearest to her and the only one by whom she unconsciously measures all others, he has a tremendous influence upon her choice of boy friends. How often we hear a girl say that she is going to marry a man "like daddy." As a matter of fact, as we know from our studies of women nervously ill, a girl often becomes so much attached to her father that she cannot be happy except with a man who resembles him, or she may even be completely unable to transfer her affections from him to any other man, so that she either does not marry at all or fails in marriage because she is already, in a sense, married to her father.

There are other dangers in the father-daughter relationship. If the father is harsh and domineering, he may call forth the masculine element in the girl's nature as a protection against his dominance. Or

if he is harsh and abusive to the mother, the girl may come to hate and fear him, and in her love and sympathy for her mother unconsciously to identify herself with her and to extend her attitude toward her father to all men, so that she stands little chance of growing out of the homosexual stage and reaching a normal development. In every girl the unconscious fear of maturity is strong—even while she hastens toward it she would fain hang back—fear of the husband and her relationship to him, fear of motherhood as a physical fact, fear of herself and of the unknown mysterious forces striving within her. Happy the girl whose father can be to her, at this period of her life, a friend and companion without standing in the way of her normal development.

Yet though the primary and central fact of puberty is sex and the effort of nature to prepare the girl for motherhood, she herself is unaware of the old Dame's ultimate purposes. It is Life, not sex, that bursts upon her bewildered view at puberty—Life mysterious, alluring, beckoning to her from a thousand angles. Strange feelings flood her soul, feelings of yearning and aspiration, stretchings and strainings after something, she knows not what; her own smallness, incompleteness, overwhelm her. Soul-destroying loneliness, and a vital need for contact with something, someone, whose greatness can

“flow round her incompleteness,” possess her. She desires to give herself wholly, not only to be loved, as in childhood, but to love, to rise to supreme heights of sacrifice and devotion. These are religious sentiments *par excellence*, and the great religions of the world have always recognized the necessity of taking advantage of this period for religious instruction and for securing formal adherence to church or creed. God is very near to the adolescent girl; her heart is so filled with love, so overflowing with desire for great experiences, that only the Infinite can fill it. Just as in far-off, primitive days another girl fasted and prayed, endured sleepless nights and untold hardships that God might speak to her and that she might go back to her people carrying in her heart the memory of a stupendous moment that forever marked her as akin to an unseen world, so does the girl of today yearn for spiritual experiences. If we wall this aspiring spirit in with material things, if we refuse to take advantage of this flood tide of emotional interest and capacity for unselfish devotion, the girl suffers permanent loss. To set before her high ideals, not impossibly high, but ideals that she has some chance of approximating; to bring her in contact, personally and through history and literature, with characters of high purpose and earnest endeavor; to direct her attention to ends which her

aspiring altruism may serve, to broaden her interests so that the developing love-life may find legitimate channels of expression—these are the tasks which her training must accomplish if her emotional life is to develop normally.

[ Puberty, then, represents the last barrier which the girl has to leap on her way to full maturity. It is the period during which, in some way or other, she must break the bonds of the family, must shake off the hands, however loving and wise, that would fain hold her back, and fare forth alone to find herself as an individual. This does not mean, of course, that she no longer needs the care, protection, and help of her elders, or that the family should soon lose its hold upon her affections and interests. But it does mean that her psychological needs are different, her mental and emotional attitudes are changed. Her face is toward the future, life is rushing to meet her; she is become a Person, with needs, feelings, ideas, of her own.

Puberty is a beginning, not an end; physiologically it marks the preparation for mating and motherhood; psychologically it turns the girl away from her childish self and her dependence upon the family; and socially it is her introduction to the opportunities and responsibilities of maturity. In earlier times mating, motherhood, full participation in the

activities of the group, clan, or tribe, followed hard upon the heels of physiological puberty; the girl's training was finished, her girlhood was over, where today we consider it just begun. ]

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### CHAPTER III

## THE ABNORMAL GIRL

So far we have been outlining the development of the normal girl, one who is fairly well endowed by nature, who is fortunate enough to suffer no twists or abnormalities of development, and who can be trusted to set a straight course for maturity and to make her way with a minimum of assistance from her elders. But this type of girl is far less common than we like to think. Teachers and educators, physicians, philanthropists, legislators, and parents are continually called upon to deal with girls who are so out of the ordinary that the usual methods of training and treatment are of no avail. Very slowly we are learning that the girl who makes a conspicuous failure at adaptation to the life of her immediate social group is more likely than not a sufferer from intellectual or emotional defects and abnormalities, or both.

Abnormal behavior depends upon the standards of conduct in the society in which the offender lives, and by "abnormal" we mean nothing more than deviation from the usual. It is entirely true that progress would be forever estopped in a society which



tolerated no change or deviation from the usual modes of behavior; but so averse is human nature to innovation of any sort, and so dependent are we upon the support and approval of the social group, that conduct which is markedly unusual should always raise the suspicion of a mental aberration. Not always by any means do we find mental and social defect correlated, but their correlation occurs so frequently that in dealing with the behavior problems of adolescence the first thing to be ruled out is the presence of a defective or abnormal mental state.

A few years ago we heard a great deal about the feeble-minded. We were told that delinquent girls, prostitutes, and criminals were feeble-minded and so not responsible for their misdeeds. It was presumed that twelve years was the dividing line between normality and defect, and that a child who measured three or more years below his actual age could never hope to be "normal." A better knowledge of the subject has shown us that the matter is not so simple. Environment and training, physical conditions and defects or maladjustments in the emotional sphere, all play a part in making the human organism what it is at any given moment, and it is by no means always easy to distinguish which is exerting greater influence. But it is undoubtedly true that, for one reason or another, human beings are very unequally

endowed in the matter of intellect. They vary all the way from the idiot, whose intelligence is so slight that he cannot learn to talk or otherwise advance beyond the status of infancy, to the towering genius of an Aristotle, a Bacon, or a Franklin. The majority of people are neither idiots nor geniuses, but the possessors of "average" intelligence. Just what this average is need not concern us here, though we shall find it of vast importance when we come to questions of education and vocational guidance. The feeble-minded may be defined as those people so far below the average in intelligence that they can never be expected to measure up to adult standards of conduct or learn to do the things expected of the ordinary person. Intellectual development has ceased by the time puberty is reached, and the mental status throughout life is that of a child.

The greater degrees of feeble-mindedness are easily recognized. The child is very backward in development, it does not sit up, nor learn to walk or talk at the usual age. The healthy baby of a year is active and stirring, sitting up, or trying to walk, throwing its playthings about, reaching and grasping for objects it sees, babbling and cooing, responding in a dozen ways to attention. When a child of this age lies quietly with no apparent attention to its surroundings, or responds only with whining or

fretful cries, cannot hold things in its hands, and makes no attempt to sit up, mental defect should always be suspected, if no physical condition can be found to account for the situation. Sometimes the child has a flattened nose, a thickened tongue, slanting eyes, and facial features resembling the Chinese—a condition known as *mongolism*. Such children are very imitative, and may present a picture of mischievousness and wilful disobedience, so that the extent of their defect is not recognized by the parents. They seldom learn to talk beyond the utterance of disconnected words and phrases. In the condition known as *cretinism* the baby has a coarse, thick skin, its hair and teeth do not develop, or the hair is coarse and scant, the bones are soft, and the muscles flabby and undeveloped. This condition is treated by the feeding of certain glands, the secretion of which is insufficient in the child. When begun early enough, the condition is markedly improved, though up to certain limits only. The treatment of mongolism is yet in the experimental stage, but its causes seems to lie in glandular deficiency also. Again, the baby may have an abnormally small head or an abnormally large one; in either case the brain stands small chance of normal development. Or the brain or spinal cord may be injured during birth or even before, so that there is paralysis

of the limbs on one or both sides, difficulty or inability in speech, and a stunted mental development. (This condition is to be distinguished from that resulting from infantile paralysis). It sometimes happens that the intellectual areas of the brain are not injured, and the apparent mental defect is due to the child's inability to express itself in motor terms—to walk, talk, or use its hands. In this case, if the paralysis is not too complete, special training may enable the child to approximate a normal mental development.

But more often than not there is no unusual physical defect in a feeble-minded child. She may develop slowly, and the parents think her sickly or delicate, and hope she will outgrow it; because she prefers the society of younger children or her elders, her defect is less noticeable. She may be quiet, dull, obedient, and a good little girl. On the other hand, she may be normal in physical development and superficially bright and alert, in which case it is far more difficult to discover the defect. The feeble-minded differ in disposition, in temperamental and emotional qualities, just as the normally intelligent do, and in the higher grades of mental defect it is these qualities that turn the scale for or against social adaptation. The young woman of twenty with a mentality of nine may be so quarrelsome, wilful, and given to outbursts of emotion that she

cannot be trusted outside an institution; another of like age and mental status, with a stable emotional make-up, obedient to authority and anxious to please, may make a good servant or an efficient factory hand.

In the home, where she is in a more or less sheltered environment and where there are simple, easy tasks well within her powers of comprehension and accomplishment, the defective girl may not be recognized as inferior; in school she learns slowly and with increasing difficulty as she grows older. When puberty supervenes, her lack of judgment and poor powers of inhibition lead to conduct which is often ascribed to character defect. She is difficult to control, she cannot be reasoned with, she has no regard for conventions nor accepted moral standards. She may and often does have a superficial brightness and ability to play up her feminine charms that leads her conduct to be ascribed to anything other than the real cause: she is thinking as a child, although she is feeling as an adolescent. If the girl is fortunate enough to come of a good family and be brought up in a good home, she may rather successfully conceal her defect, and such girls sometimes make good marriages. But when the responsibilities of motherhood and adult situations come upon them they amaze their friends by their inadequacy, and often break completely.

Such a girl was Mary A—, admitted to the hospital at the age of thirty-three. She was the mother of six children, her husband being a capable young business man. Upon admission she was crying and moaning, imagining that evil spirits were persecuting her, that she was being poisoned, and her children taken away from her. In a short time she became quiet, adapted herself well to the hospital regime, and occupied her time playing simple airs on the piano, or sitting on the porch watching the passers-by. She had been brought up in a convent, returning home at sixteen, where she had been closely guarded till her marriage at nineteen. She had been very pretty and sweet, had loved dances and parties, but was not much of a talker, a fact which her husband had thought due to modesty. After marriage she proved unable to run the household, and this matter devolved upon her husband's mother, to whom Mary was very sweet and obedient. When the children came, she seemed to adore them, loved to dress them up and take them out, but took very little of the responsibility of their care. When a baby was fretful or needed attention at night, it was the husband who had to give it. Mary grew more irritable and nervous as the family increased, and after the birth of the sixth child she broke down completely, and had to be brought to the hospital.

The results of the mental examination, given after she had recovered from her acute episode, were quite in keeping with the history, and justified the diagnosis of mental deficiency.

In school the high-grade defective girls are problems because they cannot advance with their mates, and parents are so often inclined to blame the teacher or anything except the girl's inability to learn. Frequently the child herself is considered at fault. "She could learn if she would try," is the reiterated complaint. "She wants to play all the time, she won't study at home, she will not concentrate." The girl may be punished or bribed or given special help and attention, all of which are wide of the mark because she is expected to do something beyond her power. If she is of the alert and active type, talkative, and with a good memory, it is all the more difficult to believe in her actual deficiency.

Pearl B— was a good-looking, well-developed girl of fifteen who did not reach the fourth grade until twelve years old. Dissatisfied with her progress, her parents placed her in another school and engaged a high-school girl to tutor her in the evenings. She was sent to a girl's camp in the summer with a special tutor and promised a trip to California if she made the grade that year. Pearl made honest efforts and was promoted on the strength of her

endeavors. At fifteen, repeating the sixth grade and knowing that she would fail of promotion again, she stole sixty dollars from her mother and ran away to New York, where she was found by the police a week later dancing in a cabaret in a questionable district. Pearl's intellectual development proved to be somewhat below that of the average child of ten years. Her good memory, her pleasing appearance, and her volubility made it hard to believe that she was really a feeble-minded girl, but the evidence was unmistakable.

The fourth grade is practically the limit of the defective's ability in academic work, and when promoted beyond it she either fails completely or rebels against school, becomes a disciplinary problem or a truant. Handwork is the only thing that makes an appeal to her, and in schools which maintain special classes for backward children, and in the institutions, such girls are found doing astonishingly good work in weaving, basketry, sewing, and the simpler household arts. The defective girl learns slowly, she has to be shown with much patience, but once a process is mastered she performs it in routine fashion, with little of the fatigue and distaste that a normal person experiences in being obliged to stick to a routine task. The story is told of a girl who had for years been punching three holes in the rings that support



electric-light shades. One day she was told to punch four holes instead, with a corresponding increase in pay, and an inspector found her muttering: "Dammit, I gotta punch four holes, I won't stand it, I won't punch four holes. They ain't got no right to make me punch four holes. I only been punchin' three holes. Dammit, I gotta punch four holes!" If that girl was not feeble-minded, she was dangerously near the border line.

When the high-grade defective girl leaves school and goes to work, she becomes an industrial and economic problem. If she is of a stable make-up and finds a niche in industry suited to her feeble powers, she may continue to punch holes or make pinheads for years in entire contentment. She is perfectly willing to do the monotonous or disagreeable tasks that her brighter sisters shun. But she cannot plan nor look ahead, she cannot adapt herself to new conditions nor meet new situations. She is easily influenced and is apt to throw up her job at the instigation of an agitator or fellow workman. She is the most frequent victim of accidents by machinery. In most states the minimum-wage and the workman's-compensation laws have operated to throw out of industry a certain group of workers who, according to the employers, are not worth the minimum wage and the compensation risk to the industry. Yet in

some way or other these people must be provided for. Comparatively few defective girls belong to families able and willing to maintain them at home and afford them the protection they need; the majority come from families that are either themselves defective or so low in the economic scale that the girl must work or be provided for otherwise. It is not possible at present to segregate all defectives in institutions nor is it even desirable. Many of them are quite capable of self-support under favorable conditions, and, as has been said, they perform cheerfully the tasks that are particularly irksome or disagreeable to more normal people. Slatternly Susan, for instance, who cleans cars in the railroad yards at night, at thirty-five has a mind that has not progressed beyond the eight-year level. If it had, she would conceivably not be cleaning cars.

But the great problem with the adolescent girl of defective mentality is the social one. Though she is no more often hypersexed than her normal sister, her suggestibility, defective judgment, and poor powers of inhibition make her an easy prey of designing or unscrupulous men, and once started on a career of sex delinquency she is almost sure to continue. Left to themselves, feeble-minded girls marry or form irregular unions with men of their own mental caliber, and society must take care of their off-

spring. Those of the prettier and more vivacious types are frequently found among professional prostitutes, at least while their youth and attractiveness last. The problems of illegitimacy and venereal disease are by no means identical with that of mental defect, but they overlap largely, and there is no doubt that the former would be materially lessened if mental defect could be eradicated.

Looked at from any standpoint the high-grade feeble-minded girl, unless she belongs to a responsible family, is a community liability, and we are just beginning to take cognizance of the fact. So far as we now know, the condition is a permanent one and the problem is one of care and training and not of treatment, except in a few instances so rare as to be negligible. It is entirely possible, with the means now available, to recognize these girls in childhood and to train them to self-support and to useful careers. In the State of New York, Dr. Bernstein, superintendent of the Custodial Asylum at Rome, has been very successful in placing girls of this type in colonies, where from twelve to sixteen years of age they are trained in domestic work, hand laundry, sewing, and millwork. They are then allowed to work, at first living in the colony houses and going out by the day, later living at the houses where they work, and using the colony as a social centre, returning to it for

recreation, amusement, and for further instruction. A parole agent visits them where they work, assists the family in understanding them, and keeps track of the girl's progress. Earnings are spent for the upkeep of the colony, for clothing, savings accounts, pleasure, and personal articles. Dr. Bernstein estimates that one half of all the feeble-minded who have to be cared for by reason of dependency and delinquency can be thus provided for. In Massachusetts, Dr. Fernald, of the State School at Waverly, has worked out a State program for the care of the mental defective, which includes the registration of the feeble-minded, visitors to keep in touch with every known case, the instruction of parents in the care and management of such children, special classes for them when they cannot properly be taught in the ordinary classes, and the legal recognition of their permanent mental disability and of the extent of their responsibility.

Whatever plan is eventually adopted, the responsibility for the recognition and training of the defective will probably devolve upon the public-school system. The school is the only agency that comes in contact with all the children of the community, and it already has much of the necessary machinery. But even the best organized and most efficient special-class systems at present must turn their

pupils out at the close of school life into a world that takes no account of their shortcomings nor attempts to utilize the knowledge and skill they have so painfully gained. By definition the feeble-minded are unable to compete with their normal fellows; life must be made easy for them, niches must be provided for them, and if the home cannot protect them the community must.

It is comparatively easy now for the psychologist to discover the feeble-minded girl, and more is known about her and the potentialities of her training and development than about any other type of girl. Because her mental life is comparatively simple and its limitations definite, she must live on certain levels and is incapable of functioning socially above them. Given certain environments, such as the overstimulating one of a large city, we can predict her failure; equally so—if the problem is one of mental defect uncomplicated by emotional instability or mental disease—we can foresee her success in a simple and sheltered environment. We have next to consider a group of cases far more numerous and less well understood.

In these people the defect lies outside the intellectual field; their faults and peculiarities are not due primarily to intelligence or the lack of it. They may possess any degree of intelligence, from

feeble-mindedness up to genius, and yet be unable to adjust themselves to life. They may be morbidly sensitive and overconscientious, or apparently totally lacking in moral sense; they may be over-suggestible and weak-willed or abnormally set and stubborn; they may possess an excess of emotional life or appear unnaturally cold and lacking in normal appreciation of emotional values. Their defects appear on the side of temperament and character, and the limits of their responsibility are very hard to define. Many of our most stubborn and baffling problems of adolescent behavior are found within this field. We are beginning to distinguish two groups of these cases, though the line between them is hard to draw and there is much confusion in regard to terminology, to say nothing of differences of opinion among psychiatrists—specialists in mental disorders—themselves. To the first group we give the name *psychoneuroses*, and the sufferer from such a condition is called psychoneurotic, or, more briefly, neurotic. In this group we place the sufferers from all those nervous conditions popularly known as hysteria, neurasthenia, shellshock, nerves, and so on, and other peculiarities of behavior which to the layman are mysterious or supernatural. These conditions are all alike in that there is no discoverable organic basis for the symptoms; they are *psycho-*

*genic*, that is, arising in the mind; and they yield to mental treatment of one form or another.

The physical and mental manifestations of the psychoneurosis are legion, and it is beyond the province of a book such as this to describe them in detail, yet they are of great interest to us because of their frequent occurrence in adolescent girls. The neurotic girl is a narcissist; though she may not be aware of it she is in love with herself, and cherishes herself with a fondness that makes a normal adaptation to reality impossible. She is commonly spoken of as nervous and the whole family may be taught to spare her because she is so delicately organized that she cannot bear rude shocks or strains. She is eternally suffering accidents and illnesses, is always being misunderstood and having things happen to her which do not befall her mates. She often appears merely unfortunate and to be striving very hard to do and have things that forever escape her. She is given to violent friendships which last but a short while, because her self-love is so easily wounded, and she demands everything and gives nothing in return. She almost invariably fails in marriage. If she has money she goes from one fad to another, restlessly seeking, yet never satisfied. If she is poor, she goes the rounds of charity hospitals or fastens herself upon sympathetic friends. She embraces new cures

and new religions; quacks and fakirs of all sorts find in her their legitimate prey.

Sometimes the neurotic girl is the victim of *phobias* or abnormal fears, obsessions, or impulses to all sorts of peculiar conduct. We all know people who have an exaggerated dread of the darkness, of storms, or of certain animals. Others are afraid of high places, of the water, of a crowd, of being in a closed room, or of attempting to cross an open space on the street. There are literally hundreds of these phobias, and the possession of any one of them may make life a burden.

Ellen B— is a young woman who has an abnormal fear of contamination from dirt; she cannot eat unless she herself has just sterilized the dishes, and her food has to be prepared with ceremonial cleanliness. She is especially afraid of her mother, and she will not touch anything her mother handles, nor sit in a chair which she has occupied. Ellen's strange phobia actually drove her from home; so unhappy were both she and her mother over the situation that her father, who works in the neighboring city, obtained a room for her there and attempted to get her interested in art; but Ellen transferred her fear to the landlady of her boarding house, things were no better than before, and in despair her parents brought her to the hospital. Here she was so terrified



and unhappy that nothing could be done for her, and, promising to try to control herself, she returned home, where she is still making life miserable for herself and her family.

Flora C— was a girl whose fear of open spaces was so great that she could not cross a room alone, and could not even walk unless she was touching some immovable object with the tips of her fingers. She could make her way around the room only by touching the walls and furniture. Another girl, mentioned by Frink<sup>1</sup> had an obsessive doubt concerning her clothes, and no sooner was a garment finished than she was compelled to rip it up and make it over again. Another<sup>2</sup> had a phobia concerning feathers. She was utterly miserable in a crowd, for fear the feather on another woman's hat might touch her; a feather on the floor would send her into spasms of fear.

Sometimes the anxiety and fear are so great as to amount to an anxiety neurosis, in which extreme nervousness and anxious dread are accompanied by physical symptoms, flushing or paling of the skin, rapid and irregular heart, vomiting and feelings of suffocation, trembling and shaking, and all the other indications of extreme fear. Lucy D.<sup>3</sup> was a girl in

<sup>1</sup>FRINK, H. W., *Morbid Fears and Compulsions*.

<sup>2</sup>Courtesy of DR. LUCILE DOOLEY, of St. Elizabeth's Hospital.

<sup>3</sup>Reported by DR. NOLAN D. C. LEWIS in the *Psycho-analytic Review* for April, 1923.

whom these symptoms were supposed to be the result of a goitre. The goitre was removed by surgical means, but the symptoms continued, and showed no signs of improvement even after nine months. They proved to be the result of a purely mental cause, and subsided when the mental attitude was changed.

When a girl who is the victim of some such conditions as those described above is told by the physician that she has no physical defect but is merely "nervous" she is no better off than before, as it is usually quite impossible for her to shake off her condition, as her friends frequently think she could. Sometimes a change of environment, getting away from her family or certain of her friends and taking up new interests, is of benefit. And when these conditions occur in early adolescence, there is more of a chance of their being left behind in the course of development. A great deal of light has been thrown upon them in the last twenty years by the researches of the psychoanalyst. The peculiar acts, the doubts and fears and obsessions, the impulses and compulsions, have all been shown to be not utterly bizarre and meaningless, as they look, but a means of self-defense on the part of the organism, or the symbolic expression of ideas and feelings of which the girl herself may be totally unaware. Analysis, by which we

mean the thorough exploration of the patient's mental life, brings these buried ideas to light and enables her to deal with them in the open, after which the nervous manifestations disappear.

Not all these cases are hysterical in the true sense, though they are popularly spoken of as such. Hysteria proper is one of the most interesting and peculiar afflictions of the human race, and one which has given rise to an enormous number of superstitions. In hysteria certain groups of ideas or emotional states, which are usually buried far out of sight in the mental life so that the subject is entirely unaware of their existence, rise into consciousness and for the time being take control of the personality. The patient's mental life is *split* or *dissociated*. The victim may appear delirious, she may sink into stupor, or be in a dream-like or trance state. The cases of double or multiple personality, in which two or more totally different persons seem alternately to occupy the same body, are cases of hysteria. A classical study of this type is Dr. Morton Prince's story of Miss Beauchamp.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Prince treated the young woman, a student at Boston University, for some months, finding her a case of multiple personality, in which at first a mischievous, childish

<sup>1</sup>PRINCE, *The Dissociation of a Personality*. See reference at the end of the chapter.

personality alternated with a more mature and dignified one. The childish personality called itself "Sally" and had full knowledge of everything that Miss Beauchamp thought and did, though Miss Beauchamp had no knowledge of Sally's existence, only as she was told of things she did and said when Sally was in control. All she knew was that there were gaps in her memory, hours or even days when she had no knowledge of where she was or what she was doing. After a time other personalities appeared, some of which had no knowledge of the other two and no recollection of anything that had happened in the months Miss Beauchamp had been under treatment. The story of the complications and misunderstandings arising from the fact that one young woman possessed four or five personalities, which were as different in their tastes, ideas, and desires as can well be imagined, is more entertaining than any novel, though the poor victim found it anything but entertaining.

The ouija-board cases and cases of automatic writing, in which stories or purported interviews with spirits are produced, are due to the same principle. The subject may have no conscious knowledge of what she is producing, may even be blindfolded, or the writing may be hidden from her by a screen, while her attention is distracted by conversation or

reading. The writing may be in a strange language, or the subject may draw things she thinks she has never seen. A girl who had never studied anatomy drew in this way a picture of the bones of the foot and leg,<sup>1</sup> correct to the last detail, a difficult feat for even an anatomist to perform from memory. Another who had no gifts (or so she thought) for literary expression produced exquisite little fairy tales in beautiful child language.<sup>2</sup> The subject may find these automatic productions so foreign to her everyday self that they seem to be coming from another world, but in every case studied they have proved to be a part of the writer's unconscious mental life. The girl who drew the picture of the foot had passed a skeleton of the human body every day for months in her entrance to the laboratory; the one who wrote the fairy tales was but reproducing the little stories told to herself in child language at the age of six.

Trance mediums and clairvoyants, when not pure fakes, belong to this group of mental phenomena; there is a greater or lesser degree of "dissociation" or the tendency for a group of ideas to become separated from the main stream of ideas and to appear in

<sup>1</sup>Reported by DR. ANITA MARY MÜHL in *Journal of Abnormal Psychology and Social Psychology*, July-Sept., 1922.

<sup>2</sup>DR. ANITA MARY MÜHL, *Journal of Abnormal Psychology and Social Psychology*, Jan.-Apr., 1923.

isolation. There is nothing mysterious about this; we all have experience of dissociated states. We become angry and we do and say things of which we would not have believed ourselves capable, or we experience a great fright and perform automatically actions that we cannot recall afterward.

There is danger, however, for people with nervous tendencies in meddling too much with the phenomena of dissociation. Miss G., an intelligent and cultivated woman, began receiving messages from dead friends through automatic writing and the ouija board. The messages suggested that she was a medium and should give herself up to spirit possession. She attempted to do so, and went into trances when she heard voices. Later the "spirits" spoke through her, and she began holding seances in the approved fashion. After a few months of this the "spirits" became uncontrollable, and she was unable to keep her mind on her work, preached and shouted on the street, felt impelled to go about to various scientists and demonstrate her power. Penniless, she arrived in Washington with a message from the spirits for the President. She was no longer able to care for herself or manage her own affairs, and it was necessary to confine her in a mental hospital.

The outbreaks of "dancing mania," witchcraft and sorcery, and religious frenzy that have occurred

from time to time in various places have always had a large proportion of adolescent girls and young women concerned in them, and some of them have been largely instigated and carried on by young girls. The outbreak of witchcraft in Colonial New England has been traced to a group of hysterical young girls. In ancient times and among primitive peoples hysterical phenomena were attributed to the influence of some god or superior being. The priestesses of Apollo, under the spell of the god, raved, frothed at the mouth, and uttered strange prophecies. During the Middle Ages epidemic hysterical outbreaks were common, and even in our own day such phenomena occur among certain religious groups—trances, ecstasies, cataleptic states, and convulsive movements being interpreted as manifestations of the power of a spirit.

There are other forms of hysteria; the cases of paralysis, of blindness, and deafness, of inability to speak, of nervous indigestion, and heart disease, which show no organic lesion and are helped by suggestion or any one of the many forms of mental healing, are of hysterical origin. Hysteria can simulate any known disease, and its victims be as miserable as if they really had it. In hysteria, however, there is always something to be gained which compensates for the suffering endured; the blindness or deafness

keeps the soldier from duty at the front; a weak heart excuses the school girl from onerous duties or secures her attention and sympathy. But it must not be supposed that hysteria and malingering are synonymous terms; the sufferer is innocent of any conscious attempt at fraud. The hysterical girl often deceives herself better than anyone else. The physician tells her that there is nothing the matter, her friends ignore her complaints or urge her to forget her pains, but she continues miserable, convinced that no one understands her trouble, trying first one cure and then another, and growing into disappointed and embittered womanhood. If she by chance finds some occupation or cult or philosophy that can absorb the excess energy which she has been centering upon herself she may be quite marvelously cured.

All these neurotic conditions or psychoneuroses are far more hopeful when they occur at puberty or in early adolescence. Nervous stability, self-knowledge, and self-control may develop with the years, especially if the girl is under a wholesome mental regime, with plenty of outlet for her energies, and in an environment where her symptoms are not unduly stressed. The training of the girl must oftener than not begin with the training of the parents. The one thing that we have learned about these cases is that



their troubles begin in childhood. The nervous child, pampered, spoiled, and kept dependent upon doting parents; the neglected child left to choose companions and pick up knowledge where it will; the repressed and restricted child, too carefully censored and trained, are on the way to become neurotics in adolescence, if not before. A normal childhood, with wholesome outlets for natural activities, in the midst of a wholesome, happy family life, is the only safeguard against neurotic conditions that we at present know anything about.

As has been said, we know something about the psychoneuroses. During the last thirty years the psychoanalytic school, beginning in Vienna with Dr. Sigmund Freud, has studied many different forms of them and has been very successful in treatment. The war gave a great impetus to their investigation, because so many of our soldiers suffered from neurotic disorders. But there are many other people who are sufferers from disordered emotions about whom we know little. We are only slowly learning that these people are best understood as victims of an abnormal personality make-up. The psychiatrist uses the terms *psychopath*, *constitutional psychopathic inferior*, and *psychopathic personality* to cover these cases which do not fit into any other classification. Such terms are the "psychiatric

scrap baskets," into which we throw all those cases for which for the most part we are as yet able to do nothing. There are a vast number of these people; they are criminals, tramps, vagabonds, cranks, eccentrics, sex-perverts, pathological liars and swindlers, kleptomaniacs. They are excitable, emotionally unstable, impulsive, egocentric, inadequate personalities, antisocial, morally obtuse, unable to adjust themselves to reality. Not all persons who show the above traits are psychopaths, and on the other hand it is undoubtedly true that many psychopaths perform acts of unusual social value. The popular belief that genius and insanity are allied probably arises from the frequency with which psychopathic traits are associated with genius. Good intelligence, however, is apt to check or neutralize the psychopath's antisocial tendencies, or at least enable him to carry them out under a socially acceptable guise, so that in court or hospital practice we do not meet many people of this type who are of superior intelligence.

The most difficult problems of adolescent behavior are found within this group. The psychopathic girl is a law unto herself and baffles our most earnest attempts to understand her. When she possesses a fair or even good intelligence, her defects appear all the more startling. Even in early child-

hood these defects are plain, and no amount of training irons them out; this is the distinguishing mark of the constitutional psychopath, her inability to profit from experience. The task of training with every child consists in the guiding of its instinctive tendencies into forms of expression more or less in accord with the standards of its social environment, and the normal child gradually learns to inhibit the uncontrolled expression of its impulses and to measure its conduct in terms of social approval. Not so the psychopath; from the very beginning she is an individualist and will not respond to the type of training suited to the average child. Not that the psychopathic child does not learn, but she learns apparently only what she wishes to. This rigidity of the mental life is different from the slowness in learning which characterizes the feebleminded. A child of the latter type learns up to the limit of her ability. If punishment fails to deter her from committing the same offense again, it is because she has failed to make the connection between cause and effect, and she cannot look into the future and foresee the consequences of her deeds. The psychopath, on the other hand, though intellectually entirely capable of connecting cause and effect, will fail to do so in a manner quite inexplicable to the observer. Added to this inability to profit from experience is

a superficiality of the emotional life that strikes even the layman as peculiar. The girl is incapable of any deep devotion; her only passion is herself. She may have violent crushes or love affairs, and spasms of religious or altruistic devotion, but they are short-lived and produce no alteration whatever in her character.

No amount of social pressure, of approval or disapproval, of punishment or reward, serves to break down once established psychopathic traits. Society must conform to these people, and not they to society. Frequently the psychopath's whole life is a struggle to assert her personality against the overwhelming social odds. A comfortable adjustment is usually impossible, and eccentricity, delinquency, or criminalism is the result.

The problem of the psychopathic girl is at present baffling. Some investigators believe that her difficulties are due to faulty handling and wrong environment in early childhood, when the basic character patterns are in process of formation; others contend that her defects are innate, a matter of original endowment, and no more to be altered than the lack of intelligence in the feebleminded.

A few of the more striking behavior abnormalities usually called psychopathic have been carefully studied. Among the most curious are the cases of

so-called pathological lying and accusation which sometimes get into court and are made much of in the newspapers. Healy,<sup>1</sup> who made a careful and thorough study of one hundred and eighty-four cases of excessive lying and twenty-one cases of false accusations "of an excessive and dangerous sort," gives the following definition: "Pathological lying is falsification entirely disproportionate to any discernible end in view, engaged in by a person who, at the time of observation, cannot definitely be declared insane, feeble-minded, or epileptic; such lying, although exhibited in very occasional cases for a short time, manifests itself most frequently by far over a period of years or even a lifetime. It represents a trait rather than an episode. Extensive, very complicated fabrications may be involved."

One of the most interesting of his cases is that of a girl whom he calls Marie M—. While a first-year student in a university this girl asked for an interview with one of her instructors and told a plausible and detailed story of how she had shot and killed a man. She said only two or three people knew of the facts and she was terribly worried about the whole affair. Upon the basis of her statements an investigation was undertaken by a group of professional

<sup>1</sup>HEALY, *Pathological Lying, Accusation, and Swindling*, page 1. See reference at the end of the chapter.

men, one of them a lawyer of wide experience. Marie's story included many items of her career since the age of twelve. She was an orphan living with relatives and she implicated another relative whom she accused of hounding her in an effort to get her to lead an immoral life. She had had various strange experiences. Once she went with a man in an automobile under promise of meeting a friend and was taken to a building where men with revolvers were on guard while girls were given hypodermic injections; just as the needle was about to be plunged into her arm she snatched the man's revolver and shot him in the back. The tale was thoroughly coherent and succeeded in impressing the professional men so that they spent much valuable time before they were convinced she was fabricating. When studied by Dr. Healy she reiterated the whole tale with embellishments. Physically she was a decidedly good specimen, and nothing abnormal was discovered in her history, except that from the earliest age of which it was possible to obtain a satisfactory record, about ten, she had been given to fanciful falsehoods. She had never been a gainer from her tales, but many times she had lost friends and coveted opportunities by her lying. Aside from this her mental life had not been noticeably peculiar. Nothing could be done for this girl; her tales in-

creased and her college work grew poorer, and she was forced to leave.

Another girl, Abbie D—, known to the writer, was made a court ward at fourteen because of her tales concerning her own immorality. She accused various boys and men of immoral practices with her, and told such detailed stories not only of normal relations but of perversions that it seemed impossible for her not to have experienced what she could describe so minutely. Yet the stories were proved entirely without foundation.

The kleptomaniacs, or pathological types of thieves, have received considerable attention also. Articles that are of no value to the thief are taken, or the impulse to steal comes suddenly and the individual is completely at its mercy. Again, the stealing is periodic; the girl may indulge in perfect orgies of stealing at certain times, and in the intervals be entirely trustworthy. Sometimes there is a feeling of confusion, or partial forgetfulness of the circumstances. Occasionally a girl of good family and apparently careful upbringing will carry on stealing activities for years in so sly a manner that she is never suspected. Again, the girl may bitterly repent of her misdemeanors and even make restitution, only to be again overtaken by the impulse to steal.

Some of these cases would seem to be real neuroses, in that the lying or stealing proves a substitute activity and a symptom of an underlying mental conflict. When the girl's mental life is explored, thoughts, feelings, and desires very different from her objective activities are brought to light. These cases offer hope of reformation. Many others, however, in spite of just as thorough and careful work, seem doomed to failure. Our treatment of such cases in the past has been on a disciplinary basis. Parents punish the girl, schools expel her, courts send her to reformatories and institutions. None of these methods is effective, since her conduct is the expression of an abnormal mental state, and as such not under her control.

There are, however, many mild cases of psychopathy which develop no such striking antisocial traits but are the source of endless anxiety and bewilderment to their families and friends. Minnie D— was such a girl. She was the third of five children, and, even in childhood, strikingly different from her brothers and sisters. She was lazy, selfish, and coarse, and seemed to have no real affection for her family. Her mother was a widow, a cultured woman of fine family, who was obliged to work to support herself and the younger children after her husband's death. Minnie was then seventeen, but she refused



to do anything to add to the family exchequer. She took the attitude that the world owed her a living and paid no attention to the mother's explanations of their financial status. She continued to loll in bed, reading novels, refusing to assist with the housework or to care for the younger children. She formed undesirable acquaintances, resented any interference with her mode of life, and was given to loud talk about her rights and privileges. Her mother finally appealed to a close friend and financial associate of the father's, who induced Minnie to take a clerical position in a down-town office, whereupon she left home and lived in a rooming house, saying she was now through with her family and wished no further contact with them. She was able to hold the position and to get on fairly well with people outside her own family.

Psychopathic traits are not uncommon developments at puberty, and because a girl shows some of them, emotional instability, impulsive conduct, even lying and stealing, is no reason why she should be considered a constitutional psychopath with poor chances for normal development. We repeat what was said in connection with the psychoneuroses, that nervous stability, self-knowledge and self-control may develop with the years, especially if the girl is under a wholesome mental regime. When such

traits begin to manifest themselves in a girl whose childhood has been normal, the chances are that they are anomalies that will be left behind in the course of further development.

To the practical question of what to do in the case of a psychopathic girl, the answer is that she should be given every chance for normal development. As far as possible the causes of her abnormal behavior should be discovered; not only should physical conditions, home influences, and early training be taken into consideration, but the girl's own reasons for her conduct and her general attitude toward life. There should be no suggestion of a censorious or condemning attitude on the part of those who are trying to help her. Always the true psychopath is "as one born out of due time," her world is of her own making, as she wishes it to be, and she finds conformity to the standards and ideals of the real world a task for which she has small inclination, and often it seems entirely beyond her. If possible she should be brought to see that happiness and the opportunity for effective living depend upon a working adjustment to society, and too much should not be expected of her. Even if she succeeds in bringing herself into line with the major requirements of society and of living within the conventions, she may still be disagreeable to live with, selfish and exacting, petty

and mean in all her social relationships, an unlovely wife and an unloving mother.

Scientific study of the psychopath is yet in its infancy; the future may show us the genesis of her conduct and the possibilities of her training. In the meantime we must be content with any method of dealing with her which minimizes her capacity for social irritation, and secures the maximum of whatever social adaptability she possesses.

The line between conditions such as we have been discussing and real mental disease is hard to draw. What seems at first a psychoneurosis may merge over into a real psychosis, or an attack of mental disorder popularly known as *insanity*.<sup>1</sup> The psychopath may indulge in emotional orgies in which she seems wholly irresponsible and which cause her commitment to a mental hospital.

<sup>1</sup>Insanity is in reality a legal term, and is meant as a definition of the subject's responsibility; an insane person cannot be held legally responsible for the acts he commits. Insanity as a medical term is falling into disuse. Abnormal mental conditions are classified as in this chapter into psychopathic conditions, psychoneuroses and neuroses, and psychoses. The two former have as yet no legal standing; a person must be declared insane to be held irresponsible, and State care is legally extended only to the insane. Since the war the psychoneurotic has received full medical recognition, and the government is providing for world-war veterans of this type in psychoneurotic hospitals. The psychopath is wholly unprovided for; he has neither legal nor medical recognition, unless he develops a state which may be legally described as insane.

The careful scientific study of psychoses is a matter of the last half century; a number of them are now fairly well understood, and their outcome, under our present methods of treatment, can be predicted with fair accuracy; but the mental disease which attacks youth, the so-called *dementia precox* or adolescent insanity, is still the least understood, the hardest to diagnose, and the most uncertain as to outcome.

Dementia precox proper is a "deteriorating psychosis," that is, a process of progressive impairment and enfeeblement of the mental powers. There may be remissions for longer or shorter periods, or apparent arrests of the course of the disease, but its general tendency is downward; the patient slips back to lower levels of mental development, he becomes childish in his mental reactions and indifferent and apathetic emotionally. The majority of chronic cases in hospitals for the insane are cases of mental disease which developed in adolescence, ran an acute course at first with periods of partial recovery, finally settling down into a state of mental and emotional indifference and apathy. The level of intelligence is lowered, the will is enfeebled, and the personality disintegrated.

Bertha M— was a quite typical case. She was a precocious child, learned rapidly at school, and was

spoken of as very bright, but she took no part in games or sports, seldom joined in conversation, and was considered queer by her schoolmates. She graduated from high school at the age of sixteen and entered college where at first she held her own, but it became increasingly difficult for her to keep her attention upon her work. She complained that she was becoming dull and stupid, grew weak and physically tired, and finally gave up college altogether. She wanted to be let alone, was irritable when her family tried to rouse her interest in anything, became increasingly forgetful, depressed, and indolent. Tuberculosis was diagnosed, and her father took her to Colorado, where for a while she rallied and appeared better. Soon, however, she again became depressed, appeared confused, lost her judgment, and did peculiar things. She grew more and more apathetic and indifferent, paid no attention to her dress or appearance, finally refusing even to eat or to attend to her bodily needs. It became necessary to take her to a mental hospital. Here she grew somewhat better after a while, but her physical condition did not improve, and she died within three years of her admission to the hospital.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The frequency with which certain forms of dementia precox are associated with tuberculosis has recently been emphasized by Dr. N. D. C. Lewis of St. Elizabeth's Hospital, who, upon the basis of autopsy findings upon a large number of cases, declares

But the hospital cases, comparatively numerous as they are, are far less frequent than the mild cases that never get into the hospital. Sometime during adolescence there is a gradually developing, mild apathy and indifference. The moral sense is dulled, ambition is lost, the girl becomes careless in dress and appearance; her judgment is defective and she does peculiar things. There may be transient periods of excitement and spurts of mental activity, but sustained interest and effort have become impossible. After a few years of such ups and downs she settles down and lives her life upon a lower intellectual level than that promised in her earlier girlhood. She is eccentric, a crank, a prostitute, or a petty criminal.

In another form of the disease the victim is suspicious of her friends and neighbors, exceedingly jealous of her rights, and always unearthing evidence of mistreatment and plots against her peace and safety. If she has means, she may engage in end-

that the disease is the mental reflection of a particular bodily state. The sufferer is a biologically inadequate individual, with energy enough to carry him through childhood but not enough to enable him to meet the demands of adult life; adolescence, with its physical changes, its psychological readjustments, and its social problems, proves the rock on which he breaks, and a physical and mental regression takes place. When the individual dies, the autopsy discloses a general lack of physical development, infantilism of the heart and lungs, and a poorly developed reproductive system.

less lawsuits and legal disputes over trivialities; if she is in poorer circumstances, she engages in neighborhood brawls or in unprovoked attacks upon her family. She develops delusions of a sexual nature and may bring grave charges against wholly innocent persons. When, however, she begins to hear voices and to feel strange influences at work upon her, or to imagine herself especially chosen by God to carry out certain purposes, her mental irresponsibility becomes evident.

There is a form of mental disease similar to the above in which the victim does not lose her touch with reality, but may build up an elaborate system of delusions while apparently remaining quite sane. This condition is known as *paranoia*. There is little or no apparent deterioration, and even after years of hospital residence a patient's abilities may appear excellent. These persons often commit crimes and are punished for them without their mental condition being recognized

Garnet D— was a bright young woman from a western state who came to Washington as a war worker in one of the government departments. She was peculiar and did not make friends, but the forewoman of her section took an interest in her and attempted to show her kindness. One day Garnet left her desk and without any warning assaulted the

forewoman, injuring her severely before her frightened fellow workers could intervene. At the trial she declared that the forewoman had been persecuting her, had made improper advances to her, and was the head of a gang who were securing girls for immoral purposes. The story was so palpably absurd that the case was transferred to the lunacy court and the girl sent to the hospital.

In mental disease, just as in the other mental aberrations we have discussed in this chapter, we do not have something that suddenly, without warning, attacks the girl at puberty or later adolescence. Almost invariably in the history of a case we find character traits or trends which can be traced back to childhood. The girl who develops mental disease in adolescence is usually of the seclusive, "shut-in" type, quiet and retiring and given to daydreaming. She does not mingle normally with other children and shows little interest in what goes on about her; she is often shy and sensitive but keeps her conflicts to herself so that others do not realize how sensitive she is. A personality make-up such as this is fruitful soil for the development of mental disease in adolescence, when to the physical strain of puberty is added the need for psychological and social readjustments.

More and more the tendency among psychiatrists is to regard dementia precox as a "profound defect



of biological adjustment,"<sup>1</sup> and to limit the diagnosis to those cases which show such defects. The fact that many cases which in the early stages cannot be distinguished from precox do recover or at least show great improvement should give us a hopeful attitude toward our adolescent patients. The actual cases of mental disease and of abnormal mental states in general are few as compared with the borderline cases and cases of adolescent instability which, under proper treatment, may be expected to recover. What is needed is a better understanding on the part of parents and teachers of the girl herself, a clearer realization of the difficulties attendant upon the growing-up process, and a knowledge of the premonitory symptoms of the commoner forms of mental disorders described in this chapter. The same warning is repeated here that has already been noted several times: A girl is not to be considered mentally ill and the outcome despaired of because she shows what seem to the observer abnormal symptoms. Neither, when such symptoms do make their appearance, should she be taken to a "mental healer" or an exponent of any one of the various cults and "isms" which claim to cure such conditions. Actual mental disease is never

<sup>1</sup>WHITE, WM. A., *Some Considerations Bearing on the Diagnosis and Treatment of Dementia Precox*, page 420.

cured by such means nor its course appreciably influenced; and valuable time is lost during which the girl's chances for recovery are materially lessened. Only a psychiatrist of undoubted standing should be trusted to make a diagnosis of mental disease or to give a recommendation for its treatment. Most of the larger cities now have clinics or other centers where expert medical advice can be obtained. Once a diagnosis of mental disease has been made, it does not necessarily mean that the girl must be taken to a mental hospital. The milder cases can usually be cared for at home, if the family is willing to tolerate the girl's idiosyncracies and able to provide conditions to which she can adjust herself with the minimum of strain. In many cases, however, not only is it best for the girl but highly desirable for the sake of other members of the household that she have hospital care.

The horror of the mental hospital which many intelligent people show is a highly unintelligent reaction, and is conditioned by the old superstitious horror of mental disease. The modern hospital, with its hydrotherapy and occupational therapy and caretakers trained in the handling of patients mentally ill, is by no means the unhappy place that the layman is apt to picture it. Where such conditions do not exist in the hospitals, it is because the average citi-

zen, secure in the feeling that he will never need its services, refuses to take an intelligent interest in it.

One other condition remains to be noted in connection with the abnormal girl, and that is the disease known as epilepsy. True epilepsy is best understood not as a tendency to convulsions or "fits," but as a "life-reaction disorder." The epileptic girl may or may not be feeble-minded; she may even be bright and talented, but she possesses a highly sensitive nervous constitution. She seldom outgrows the narcissistic stage; she is extremely self-centered and conspicuously lacking in normal emotional development. Her interests are sharply circumscribed and very narrow; her love-life is childish and her love objects valued in proportion as they conduce to her own comfort and pleasure. Like the psychopath, reality does not fit her, the strain of adjustment is too great, and she reacts by slipping away from it, by complete withdrawal into unconsciousness.

Epilepsy often first shows itself in convulsive form at puberty, though as a rule there is a history of convulsions in infancy, frequently attributed to teething or to a disordered stomach. The girl may have gone along through childhood with nothing noticeably abnormal, though nearly always there is the tendency to undue sensitiveness and abnormal

difficulties. Temper tantrums and "brain storms" are frequent; she is heedless and cruel in her relations with other children or with animals, selfish and exacting with her elders. She may have "fainting spells" or periods of unconsciousness, or she may show no sign of attacks until suddenly, after an unusual mental or emotional strain, convulsive seizures begin.

Convulsions in childhood are very often attributed to intestinal disturbances or indiscretions of diet, and convulsions do occur from such causes. But when a girl shows the personality traits described above, with periods of loss of consciousness, epilepsy is more than likely to be the cause. The actual seizures are of various kinds, and may bear no resemblance to the *grand-mal* convulsions. There may be merely a momentary lapse of consciousness during which the girl stares ahead of her but makes no noticeable movements; there may be periods in which she performs foolish or inappropriate actions, such as attempting to undress, running across the room, making grimaces or peculiar movements of her limbs. These attacks are known as *petit mal*. In *grand mal*, convulsions occur; in the classical type the attack is ushered in by a peculiar cry, the sufferer falls like a shot, often injuring herself severely; there is a period when the muscles are stiffened, the

breath is held, the face grows dark red or purplish, and froth appears on the lips; then convulsive jerkings of the limbs begin, and may last for several minutes; the tongue is bitten; and involuntary evacuation of the bladder and bowels takes place. After the movements cease the subject passes into a deep sleep, from which, however, she can be roused. There is no recollection of the period of the attack.

Some subjects have warning of an approaching attack by a feeling of dizziness, a peculiar feeling in the stomach, or a sense of heaviness and impending disaster. Sometimes this feeling is of long enough duration to enable the sufferer to lie down or to seek a place of safety. During the attack the sufferer should be prevented from hurting herself; the clothing should be loosened about the neck, a pillow placed under the head, and a space cleared for the free movement of the limbs; no restraint should ever be attempted. After the attack there is apt to be a period of confusion, which may take some time to clear.

In a certain percentage of cases the seizures occur only at night, and the disease may persist for years without realization of what is actually the trouble. Some sufferers appear but little affected by the course of the disease, but are able to remain at home or even to pursue a business or profession; others

deteriorate more or less rapidly, or develop a severe psychosis. A point of great interest is the fact that there may be substitutes for the attack itself, "equivalents" in the form of "furors" or frenzies, trances, and "fugues," the fugue being a period of confusion of longer or shorter duration in which the subject's actions are automatic and can never be recalled. Wonderful visions may present themselves during the trance, and the subject experience religious ecstasies. During the fugue or confusion, crimes may be committed. In children the furors are sometimes mistaken for bad temper and severely punished.

Epilepsy is the oldest disease known to medical science, its origin is still obscure, and its treatment yet in the experimental stage. The various "cures" so widely advertised consist of drugs which may minimize the attacks but have no effect upon the disease itself. Usually the sufferer is injured rather than helped by them. The only treatment that is really successful consists in discovering the factors in the environment which are the source of greatest stress and removing them; at the same time the sufferer must be trained in self-knowledge and the warped personality directed as far as possible into healthy activity. In other words, the epileptic child requires the most careful training in an environment

specially adapted to her. No matter how promising or talented she is, if the development of her talent means placing her in stressful positions it must be foregone. She may not be able to attend school or college, or to work at music or art; social functions may be too much for her. She may never be able to fulfill her own or her parents' ambitions, but may be able to live fairly comfortably on a low intellectual plane in a simple environment. It so often happens that a girl who has made a fair adjustment under special training returns to a home which cannot become adjusted to her idiosyncrasies and to parents who cannot understand that her health depends upon a continuance of living at a low pressure, and a breakdown is the inevitable result.

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## CHAPTER IV

### THE DELINQUENT GIRL

The delinquent girl, the girl whose conduct is so far divergent from the standards of society as to bring her into conflict with the law, has only recently begun to receive real scientific study and understanding treatment. Courts and institutions, religious and philanthropic organizations, to say nothing of parents and teachers, have struggled with the problem, postulating causes and applying remedies now on this theory and now on that, without any clear idea of the fundamental factor, that is, the girl herself. There is even yet no wide recognition of the connection between adolescence and crime. All studies of the correlation between age and offense show a very rapid rise in the number of crimes committed in early adolescence, and the peak of the curve is reached before adolescence is over.

Common sense knows that youth is the age of daring, of love of adventure, of impatience of restraint and intolerance of authority, as well as of lack of experience and of the immaturity of judgment which arises from it; but common sense does not always put into practice what it knows.

The most frequent cause of adolescent delinquency is adolescence itself and the inability of the immature and undeveloped organism to adapt itself to the highly specialized environment which constitutes the adult world. The growing-up process consists wholly, from the social-psychological standpoint, of bringing the instinctive tendencies into line with the mode of reaction which society has marked out for them. This is an herculean task at any time and is doubly difficult in a time when new standards and modes of action force themselves upon attention and the instincts themselves become clamorous for just those modes of expression denied them. This is what happens in adolescence, and the wonder is, not that so many girls come into open conflict with society, but that more of them do not.

— The first thing requisite, then, in an approach to the problem of the delinquent girl, is a knowledge of the normal processes of adolescence, a recognition of the fact that, biologically speaking, her behavior is but the expression of the conflict between the instinctive forces of her nature and the restraints society would impose upon them in the effort to make her an acceptable member of the social group. Since this is the case, it follows that the problem of the delinquent girl is a problem of the individual, and the answer to the question as to why girls go

wrong must be sought in a study of the girl herself in the particular case, and in the environment in which the delinquency occurred. With this in mind we may glance at some of the most common forms of delinquency and the causes most frequently associated with them.

As would be expected, the most common form of delinquency in girls is antisocial sex behavior. Even where the prominent features of misconduct are something else, such as stealing, truancy, or blackmail, they are nearly always found associated with the instinctive urge. The reason for this frequency is not so much due to the girl's preoccupation with sex as to our social standards; if boys were brought to book for sex delinquencies as girls are, their preponderant offenses would be found to lie in the same sphere also. But the boy who indulges in sex relations is seldom apprehended for that reason alone; the girl, if discovered, immediately comes under the social ban.

The crude sex instinct, the physical appetite, is undoubtedly very strong during the early years of adolescence, but normally it is easily satisfied, and the higher altruistic feelings of devotion and the capacity for mental and spiritual enjoyment are but little developed. This fact in itself makes for promiscuity; there may be "crushes" or violent "cases"

but there is no real love in the higher or ethical sense, and the girl may turn lightly from one affair to another without any actual realization of what her conduct means. Hettie J— well illustrates this fact. She ran away from home in South Carolina with her lover whom she expected to marry as soon as she could obtain a divorce. She was the child of a dissolute father and a mother of much superior endowment and social standing, whose people had cast her off when she married. Hettie's childhood had been very unhappy and she married at sixteen to get away from home. Her husband was abusive, and she soon left him and supported herself by millwork. She was pretty and ease loving, and marriage had stimulated her sex appetite; she had no strong inhibitions to hold her, and she yielded rather easily to first one man and then another, for several years. When she was twenty-one she met Jack, who for some reason appealed to her higher nature, and for the first time she knew what it was really to love. Feelings and desires she had never known awoke in her; disgust and horror for her former experiences filled her. "I didn't know," she said to the psychiatrist, "how could I know, there would ever be Jack? If I had known, I would have kept myself for him. I'm jealous of every word or touch I ever gave another man."

Sometimes girls and boys in early adolescence band together in a secret organization the main object of which is some sort of sex experimentation. Healy<sup>1</sup> has called attention to the frequency of this situation and emphasized the fact that parents and teachers seldom come to know of it. In the writer's experience she has met these groups over and over again. They are not always organized but are bound together through the secrecy necessarily entailed by the nature of their interests. An older boy or girl is frequently the leader. Once a girl is initiated into sex knowledge in a group of this sort she is apt to find herself helpless. She dare not tell her parents and teachers for fear of condemnation and punishment, nor does she dare refuse further participation in the group's activities for fear its members will make good their threat to "tell on her." Often there is very little knowledge of what sex implies, and even its relation to childbirth may be unknown. The girl is told that everybody does it, that it is knowledge she must have to become a woman. One group of this sort was discovered by the writer through the terror of a fourteen-year-old girl who had been told by one of the boys that she was going to have a baby. Another recently came to her attention

<sup>1</sup>*Judge Baker Foundation Studies.* See reference at the end of the chapter.

through an eleven-year-old who was brought in by her parents because she was growing very nervous, could not sleep, and had night terrors. The cause of her nervousness turned out to be her participation in the activities of such a group in her school. In both cases the members of the group were children from good families. When the existence of such a group is discovered, the parents are distracted and the school hastens to purge itself of the offenders. Coeducation, the movies, modern points of view, the lack of family life, anything is apt to receive the blame. The writer's experience, however, leads her to believe that in practically every school or other group of young adolescents there are to be found these subgroups bound together by sex interests.

The fault does not lie with coeducation, since the same type of group is to be found in schools for either sex alone. If actual sex practices do not occur, sex talk and speculation take place, suggestive pictures and pamphlets are secretly circulated.<sup>1</sup> Often the existence of such a group is unknown to other pupils of the school, but more frequently it is guessed at and tacitly accepted, though its actual purpose

<sup>1</sup>A most instructive example of the amount of sex rumination that can go on beneath the surface among girls of innate refinement of character and good upbringing is to be found in *A Young Girl's Diary* which all parents and workers with young girls should read.

and activities may not be at all comprehended by the girls outside of it. It is not an uncommon thing for boys who are not themselves members of the group but fully cognizant of its activities to warn their girl friends against association with its members, and many a girl has been thus protected who might otherwise have stumbled into it. Usually these groups fall apart as their members grow older or remove to other neighborhoods. Occasionally marriages take place among some of the members, sometimes forced because of a girl's pregnancy, sometimes because of a real compatibility which develops between a boy and a girl.

The reason for sex conduct of this sort is to be found in the nature of pubertal development. We have already called attention to the physical and psychological features of this period; nature is preparing the girl for marriage and motherhood, and she takes no account of our social customs. It is vitally necessary, from her standpoint, that the reproductive system shall function properly, and she reenforces the instinct from every angle, to make sure that it is directed toward the biological goal. The girl who indulges in sex relations around the time of puberty is but obeying a natural impulse and is no more to be regarded as inherently depraved or vicious than a young animal. This is by no means

saying that in our society we are to countenance such indulgence, but a knowledge of its real meaning is necessary to enable us to approach the subject with unbiased minds.

In many cases the actual determining factor in sex delinquency in the period of early adolescence seems not so much the existence of a physical urge as curiosity. Just as the child is curious about its own origin, so the young adolescent is curious, reaching out into the unknown to lay hold of something tangible to explain the mysteries that are pressing in upon her—the vague stirrings in her own blood, the wealth of allusion in literature, drama, and song, the interests and activities of her elders in which for the first time she feels the thrill of emotional interest. Her conduct is a type of experimentation.

On the other hand, too great a familiarity with sex may breed indifference. This factor appears very prominently in a large number of court cases, girls who come from families of an inferior mental and social type. This is especially true of girls of foreign-born parentage, from certain countries at least, whose standards of sexual conduct are often so different from our own. It is indeed rather rare in court work to find delinquent girls who were ignorant of sex relationships at the time of their first experience. Poverty-stricken homes where children are



crowded into bedrooms with their parents or other married relatives; families of low mentality who make no effort to restrain their instinctive desires; boarders or male relatives who seduce the girl in childhood, are very frequent in the history of delinquent girls.

Millie T—, a bold and flirtatious miss of fifteen, who was living with a man twice her age in a disreputable quarter of a western city, gave as her excuse for her conduct that she “just couldn’t help it! I’ve been bad since I was five years old; my brother used to sleep with me when I was little, and there’s always been somebody.” This girl was a mental defective from a low-grade family. Another girl, Lillie M—, aged sixteen, very pretty and attractive, the complainant in a rape case, long contended that she had had no previous experience, though her familiarity with sex situations suggested otherwise. She finally admitted numerous experiences, beginning at seven when her parents separated and she was placed in a foster home. Her complaint against a casual acquaintance turned out to be an attempt at blackmail. Lula J—’s case appeared different, as she came from a home which superficially was excellent; she was brought into police court by her mother on a charge of incorrigibility; she had left home two days before and spent the time hanging about the parks and marine barracks, where she

met a sailor with whom she spent the night in a lodging house. The girl was only thirteen, though she was well developed and mature both mentally and physically. Her experience had begun at the age of eight when she was seduced by her stepfather.

Occasionally we meet a girl of good mental and physical development with a strong sex urge, who boldly claims her right to sex experience, though such girls, owing to their good mental endowment, are not so apt to come to the attention of court or psychologist. Such a girl was Marie H—, the daughter of a clergyman in a large western city, who, convinced that she must be abnormal, brought the sixteen-year-old girl to an eastern specialist. There was nothing in the least abnormal about Marie; on the contrary she was decidedly a good specimen both mentally and physically. She had first indulged in sex relations at fourteen with a boy of her own age, out of curiosity. She had at that time almost no sex knowledge, although she had been primly instructed in the beauty and desirability of "purity." Her experiences with her boy friend awoke a "sleeping tiger" as she phrased it; she felt herself become a woman, with a woman's rights and desires. She was too young to marry, but the sex urge was insistent and she consciously sought other experiences. She did not fancy herself in love with any of her

partners, and the development of her sex life had not interfered with her school progress nor her ambition to go to college and to specialize in languages. When her delinquency was discovered and her distracted parents attempted to talk with her, Marie showed such a "blunting of the moral sense" as her father put it, that they thought she must be feeble-minded. The psychiatrist found a girl of quite superior intelligence, with no indication whatever of any mental unbalance or lack of mental control. She discussed her delinquency calmly, sorry that her parents were so disturbed over her, but stating that she felt herself justified, since she was possessed of a very passionate nature and saw no reason why she should inhibit her desires. "Men do not," she said; "a double standard is not fair, and I for one cannot live up to it."

The girl who, under cover of an engagement or on the basis of mutual friendship, indulges in sex relations is not so apt to be discovered, unless she becomes pregnant. Whether such girls are more common now than in an earlier day, we have no means of knowing, but certainly they are very frequent, and are to be found in all walks of life. They are the modern prototypes of the Greek Hetairai, but lack the Greek woman's charm and breadth of view, and their appeal is apt to be sensual rather than cultural or intellectual.

Molly D—, who suffered a mental breakdown after an operation at the age of thirty-two, was a slender, girlish woman, with bright, dark eyes and a vivacious manner. She was a stenographer who had held excellent positions, among them that of private secretary to the head of a large corporation. Molly had been a sexually precocious child but these activities had been so thoroughly repressed that she grew up with almost no sex knowledge, what she had being gleaned from schoolmates and surreptitious reading, and when her employer made advances to her she was not sure of his meaning, but she soon entered into a liaison with him which lasted several months. She finally tired of him and sought an excuse to leave him, going to another city, where she met and was much attracted by a man of her own age. A love intimacy with him followed, and this in due time went the way of the other. In the ten years from twenty to thirty Mollie had had no less than six lovers and had lost track of the number of abortions she had procured. She lived strictly up to her own standards and had never been the mistress of a married man nor taken money from her lovers, though she was not above accepting presents. Twice she had expected to marry, once one of her lovers with whom she quarreled on the eve of the wedding, again, a wealthy man with whom she broke because

he was "too prim." As a matter of fact, she had no real wish to marry; intellectually she was keen enough, but she was lazy, pleasure loving, and possessed of poor powers of inhibition—"weak willed." She was fickle by nature and had never really cared for any of her lovers with an unselfish devotion.

The professional prostitute, or the woman who makes her living by promiscuous sex relations, is easily developed out of the latter type of girl. A few years ago we were told that the majority of prostitutes were feeble-minded, but we know now that this statement is exaggerated. They do appear, however, in all investigations that have been made, to belong to a class whose intellectual status is comparatively low, and whose ambitions and ideals do not extend much beyond the present moment. On this point Dr. Walter E. Fernald, Chairman of the Committee of Investigation of the White Slave Traffic, reporting in 1914, says: "The woman of intelligence who resorts to prostitution and whose case is not otherwise complex, is very often to be found in the course of a few years outside the temporary field." Contrary to common opinion, the prostitute is not necessarily hypersexed nor the victim of inordinate desires. She is just as apt to be *anesthetic*—to have no real feeling unless it be for

some one person with whom she is really in sympathy and to whom she may be fanatically devoted. Indeed, many prostitutes are homosexuals, women with no natural desire for the opposite sex and incapable of real love or friendship except as directed toward another woman.

The problem of prostitution is enormously complex and can never be solved by any one formula; we have learned certain things about the woman who at the present time engages in it, but much more remains to be learned before we can attack it with a hope of solution. Certain it is that the girl of good intelligence and good social background, with a normal emotional development and a wide field of interests, is seldom if ever to be found within the ranks of the professional prostitute.

There is another form of sexual misconduct which is not so often apprehended, but is far more frequent than we like to believe. Homosexuality in the strict sense means a turning toward or desire for those of the same sex, and may manifest itself in an attitude of mind or in a totally unconscious emotional drive, as well as in perverted sex practices. We have already said that each of us in the course of development passes through a homosexual stage, in which, normally, the characteristics and interests of our own sex become firmly established. During this

period, roughly speaking from ten to fifteen years of age, the girl may dream of boys or even associate with them on terms of equality, but her real love and interest goes out to other girls. Normally boys seem to her a little repulsive; they are rough and uncouth, and her masculine ideals at this period have feminine characteristics. The phenomenon of the adolescent "crush" is familiar to all teachers and workers with girls, but many do not realize how serious it may become. If the teacher or other girl is herself of the homosexual type and reciprocates the girl's affection, even where overt sexual activities do not occur, the gravest harm may result from the stimulation of the girl's unconscious desires and their fixation upon one of her own sex as a love object.

Whether or not the homosexual man or woman is born an *invert*, as the condition is called, it is easy enough to distinguish two types, the active and passive. The former is the aggressive, masculine type of girl, bold and self-assertive, who displays no normal interest in boys, but is much attracted by the more feminine members of her own sex. She is apt to be a leader and may gather quite a following of the weaker and more timid of her associates, some of whom may not even guess the secret of their attraction to her. She is the girl who gets into the newspapers as having donned masculine attire and

adopted a masculine name and mode of life, or as having married another woman. The passive type of homosexual girl is the more affectionate, feminine type, the "clinging-vine" who bores her teachers by hanging round them and who is always seeking for physical contact with other girls and women, twining her arms about them, kissing them and fondling them; the girl who is often thought and spoken of by her elders as a "little fool," without any realization of the warped sexuality which is prompting her actions.

When girls of the homosexual type have once learned to indulge their perverse cravings, a serious situation presents itself. They are usually beyond the reach of any ordinary method of training or reform. The usual method of punishment, incarceration in a reformatory, defeats its own ends, for association exclusively with members of her own sex serves only to fan the flame of the girl's perverse passion and makes so much more remote the chance of development of a normal sexuality. Indeed, it is a question if some girls of the masculine type ever can approximate a normal development. The problem here is a medical one, for there are abnormalities of glandular development and functioning that are not yet well understood.

But the majority of homosexuals are made and not born. All students of society agree that the



condition is on the increase in western countries, and various reasons for it present themselves; our economic system under which it is becoming increasingly difficult for a man to earn enough to support a family and which delays marriage and makes it imperative that women become wage earners thus bringing out their masculine characteristics; the increasing number of women who remain unmarried because of the greater freedom and ease allowed them; the emphasis upon self-development and emotional independence which has played a prominent part in the higher education of women, are among the reasons most frequently given. All of these may be factors, but, after all, the chief reason must be psychological, and cannot be discovered in any particular case without study of the girl herself. The homosexual woman is the victim of a defective emotional development; for some reason she has failed to pass through the homosexual stage and to develop the interests and make the adjustments essential to normal adult life; no matter how brilliant or talented she may be or what her intellectual accomplishments, her emotional life is childish and immature.

As to other forms of delinquency, we have already discussed the persistent thief and the notorious liar or falsifier in connection with the abnormal girl.

The girl who steals persistently merely because opportunity offers and it is an easy way of obtaining money or desired articles is rather rare; close study of the case usually reveals an emotional drive quite unsuspected by her associates. There are, to be sure, the pilferers, usually found in domestic service, and the chronic borrowers who carelessly forget to return what they have borrowed; but these cases, no matter how annoying they may be to their employers and friends, can scarcely be classed as delinquents. Nearly all children pass through a stage of appropriating other people's property, long after they may be supposed to know better, and often the pilfering and borrowing seem little more than childish habits which have not been outgrown. But the cases of flagrant dishonesty are not so easily accounted for.

Mildred H—, a fourteen-year-old girl in first-year high school, had begun by stealing pencils and pennies from desks at school and progressed to the stealing of a watch in an office where she had gone to apply for work. She was a bright girl, with rather forward manners, but made a favorable impression in conversation. She was put on probation, and during the summer vacation her mother, to whom Mildred was greatly attached, kept her closely at home, but when school began she almost at once

stole fourteen dollars from her teacher's desk. She was now sent to an institution where the psychologist, after many weeks of interviews, learned that stealing was not the girl's main interest but was a substitute for sex activity. Her stealing had begun at the age of eleven, when another girl initiated her into sex practices. This other girl was a thief and in some way which was never quite clear to her, Mildred also began to steal. During the three years before we knew her, Mildred's mind had run like a high sea upon sex; she was obsessed by sex imagery and ideas. She had had a few experiences with boys, which she did not enjoy, but in some way or other she found an outlet for her surcharged feelings in the stealing. She stole impulsively, "something prompted" her, and she carried out the stealing swiftly, with no thought of consequences. Then for a while she felt better, and the sex thoughts did not trouble her much. Indeed, the stealing and even her punishment for it had made but little impression upon her, and she had not the slightest idea why she stole. Healy<sup>1</sup> has collected a number of such cases, among both boys and girls.

There are other cases in which an outbreak of bad conduct—stealing, running away from home,

<sup>1</sup>HEALY, WM., *Honesty and Mental Conflicts and Conduct*. See reference at the end of the chapter.

disobedience, or general incorrigibility—follows the girl's discovery that she is an adopted child or that the father or mother is a step-parent instead of her own flesh and blood, as she had always supposed. Sometimes unhappy home conditions force a girl out, and in bitterness or recklessness she enters upon a delinquent career.

It is easy to see that the adolescent-girl delinquent cannot be pigeonholed as being of this, that, or the other type, nor is there any one answer to the melodramatic question as to why girls go wrong. The answers are as various as the girls themselves. In a consideration of the causes of delinquency we must remember that we can speak only of those girls whose conduct has been discovered; the girl thief or black-mailer, the runaway girl or the one who has borne an illegitimate child is in the majority of instances known; but we have no means of knowing what percentage of girls who engage in sex practices without the sanction of law or church comes to the attention of courts or social workers. Concerning the known sex delinquents all investigators agree as to certain facts. A large percentage of such girls is suffering from mental abnormalities, and often physical abnormalities as well; they are of poor intelligence, their emotional development is defective; mental control is poor; they come from poor homes, where

poverty, ignorance, alcoholism, and low standards of personal morality are the rule, and often the home is broken by the death or desertion of parents; they are of low educational status, with few interests and a narrow outlook upon life. None of these conditions is necessarily causative, as we find many girls under similar conditions who are not delinquent; but a knowledge of them is of vast importance in helping us to understand a particular girl and in deciding what to do for her.

In the last analysis, our studies of individual delinquents have taught us that the real cause lies in the girl herself, in her mental and emotional make-up, and the habits she has formed in childhood, which lead her to act in certain situations so as to come into conflict with established social laws. Poverty, bad companions, vicious employers, questionable amusements, are all contributing factors in particular cases, but they have no general significance.

In many cases, especially when the girl is of good intelligence, the antisocial tendencies are outgrown. Maturity brings stability, and experience develops judgment. If, as has been said, adolescence itself is the chief cause of delinquency, this is what we should expect to happen. In many other cases the girl begins a delinquent career in adolescence and continues it in maturity, in spite of punishment and

attempts at her reformation. But this may be because of our faulty methods of handling her. Our treatment of delinquency has only recently begun to assume an intelligent aspect, and even yet it all too often ends with apprehension and punishment, without any attempt to discover causes or afford opportunities for rehabilitation. There are still many communities where children of both sexes are herded together with adult criminals, and almost without exception adolescent girls must appear before a male judge. This need work no hardship where the judge is a sympathetic and understanding man, and where women assistants or other officers are attached to the court, and the girl is dealt with as a girl instead of merely as a lawbreaker. But too often, in the eyes of the law and the community at large, the girl delinquent is a "bad" girl, who must be punished to effect her own reformation and as an example to others.

The greatest need in the problem of adolescent delinquency is an intelligent attitude on the part of the community, the recognition of the fact that the delinquent girl is an *unadjusted* girl, one who for some reason is failing in the task of making herself into an acceptable member of the social group. Before we can hope to deal effectively with her, to correct her antisocial tendencies and help her to

realize her possibilities, we must discover why she is failing in adjustment.

In our more progressive centers various agencies, sometimes municipal, oftener privately supported, are engaged upon the problem of adolescent delinquency. (A thorough investigation of the family background and the environment in which the delinquency occurred, with a study of the girl herself from every angle, physical, mental, emotional, supplemented by school and occupational history, serve as a starting point for diagnosis and treatment. The latter in many cases involves removing the girl from her home and trying her in another family or training group. It may, and often does, involve following her and keeping the hand of authority upon her for years, trying her in first one environment and then another, giving her this opportunity or that, in the effort to counteract her antisocial tendencies and guide her into the formation of worthier habits. Sometimes these efforts succeed and sometimes they fail, but through them a body of knowledge is accumulating by means of which we shall some day be able to understand and deal effectively with the delinquent girl.

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## CHAPTER V

### THE NORMAL GIRL

In a consideration of the abnormal conditions that may develop or become prominent during adolescence we have but cleared the way for a better understanding of the normal girl. It must be borne in mind that by "normal" we mean only what is usual, that which is found in the majority of cases; we do not mean what is "right," nor even what, from certain standpoints, may be most desirable. It is by a study of conditions such as have been described in previous chapters that we have arrived at much of the knowledge we now possess about normal adolescence, just as in medicine our knowledge of the normal functioning of the human body has grown out of the study of its functioning in disease.

It is inevitable that any discussion of adolescence, whether normal or otherwise, should make much reference to the period of infancy, for the adolescent girl, as she stands before us with her face to the future, is what she is by virtue of her childhood.

Adolescence can do no more than repeat and strengthen the development of her earlier years, can

fill out and enlarge the picture then sketched in, but cannot create nor develop new traits of character or new abilities of mind. Much superstition still clings about the period of early adolescence. The belief that puberty is a time of magical changes, that reasoning and the higher mental faculties first develop then, and that the girl becomes a woman overnight is responsible for many errors in our educational and legal practice. Adolescence can do no more than develop what is already there.

In our endeavor to understand the normal girl it is of advantage to view her from as many standpoints as possible. Though girls differ greatly from each other, yet there are certain fundamental traits and characteristics which we may expect to find in some form in all of them. Let us begin with physical make-up.

It is easy to observe the differences in physique in a group of girls—the tall ones and short ones, the plump ones and thin ones, the well-developed ones and the ones with poorly developed, undernourished bodies. But the matter needs more than mere observation. Nature fixes proportions of bodies as she does their ultimate size, and these proportions differ greatly in different people.

Ideally, a certain relation exists between the trunk and the limbs; within the trunk the various

organs and systems sustain proportionate relations to each other, and all are bound together and co-ordinated into a smoothly running whole by the nervous system. But few people do more than approximate this ideally perfect body.

We carry with us all sorts of malformations and anomalies of evolutionary development, and what is normal in one person may be abnormal in another; in general, however, people vary from the ideal human type in two directions—either the trunk is long in proportion to the limbs, or vice versa. Within limits either type is normal enough, but both types carry with them definite limitations as well as potentialities of development.

The girl with a short, slender trunk has small lungs and a small heart, a relatively deficient circulatory system, and a short intestine; she is apt to be hollow-chested and the abdominal organs may have a tendency to sag downward. She is liable to certain diseases and succumbs to them more readily than her sister of different type; she needs a certain hygienic regime, and her physical ideals, in order to realize the best of which she is capable, must be suited to her particular type. On the other hand, the girl with large trunk and limbs short in proportion, has a relatively large digestive tract with long intestines; she has a large heart and lungs; she, too,

is liable to certain diseases and needs a hygienic regime suited to her type.

There are, to be sure, combinations and differentiations of the two types which can only be detected by the physician's instruments, but in general the two are quite readily distinguishable by midadolescence.

We all know the "dumpy" girl, stockily built and inclined to stoutness, who ardently wishes to be tall and slender and who starves herself and takes exercises in the vain hope of acquiring the proportions of the fashion manikins; and the thin-chested, loosely built girl with long legs and arms who stoops and slouches, and always looks a bit awkward no matter how well dressed she is. But we are not apt to realize the extent of physical difference between the two, differences which condition the girl's health and comfort, her recreation, and, to a certain extent, her vocation. Many a breakdown might be averted if the girl's limitations and potentialities of future development were understood. Some physicians<sup>1</sup> contend that differences of type can be recognized in childhood and that under a suitable regime of diet, exercise, and treatment extreme cases can be greatly modified and brought nearer to the normal average

<sup>1</sup>Notably Montessori, the great Italian teacher and physician. See reference at the end of the chapter.

type. Be that as it may, the differences appear to be fundamental, a matter of family and race, and a knowledge of type and how far it deviates from the normal or average would seem to be very essential to a proper understanding of the girl's physical make-up and needs.

Another most important question in understanding the normal girl concerns her intellectual capacity or mental endowment. So far as we know now mental capacity or the limit of intellectual development is congenital; the child is born with a brain and nervous system capable of development up to a certain point. This does not mean that the average brain functions up to the limit of its capacity, nor that we may not hope in the future to learn to use it to much better advantage than we do now; but it does mean that in any one of us the different mental functions or abilities—memory, ability to judge and compare, to interpret situations, to reason and draw conclusions—are capable of development only up to a certain point. There may be special abilities or disabilities, a knowledge of which will aid us greatly in the selection of a vocation, but for the most part the abilities seem to develop fairly evenly, so that we can speak of a six-year level, a ten-year level, and so on. Just as the body gets its growth, so does the mind get its growth

and remain pretty much on the same level throughout maturity, capable of learning and accomplishing many things but only the things that are within its grasp at the level it has attained.

This is well illustrated in work with defectives, where, in spite of skilled teaching, the individual progresses just so far and there remains. After three years of teaching, the child whose mind has been arrested at the six-year level may be able to read in the first reader; but if she is taught as carefully for three years more she advances no farther.

Until recently we have had no scales or instruments to measure intelligence, and so no means of knowing what the average level of development was. Of late, through our work in individual psychology, we have learned how to gauge mental levels with a fair degree of accuracy; and there is reason to believe that at the present time, in this country at least, mental growth in the average person ceases in early adolescence. This is sometimes expressed by saying that the average level of intelligence is somewhere around fourteen years—a rather misleading statement. For we do not mean that the average girl at the age of fourteen knows as much as she ever will know; knowledge is a matter of experience. But we mean that her learning capacity is approximately as great as it ever will be. If she cannot apprehend

decimal fractions or learn to decline a Latin noun at fourteen (provided of course she has been properly taught) the chances are that she will not be a mathematician or a linguist at twenty-one. And yet we cannot make "snap judgments" in any individual case, for physical, emotional, and other factors may enter in to make her abilities appear less than they really are.

Educational statistics show us that the average girl does not finish high school; if she enters at all, she drops out somewhere during the course, usually in the first or second year. Educators are fully awake to this situation, for junior high schools, domestic-science courses, trade training, and continuation schools are efforts to meet it, and through them many more girls are kept in school than formerly. The older classical and academic courses do not fit the girl of average ability, and this is not to be wondered at when we reflect that the classical high-school course of today is far heavier than that of the college of a hundred years ago. It requires intellectual tastes and aptitudes which the average person does not possess.

What then can be expected of the average girl? There are certain things we know she cannot do; she cannot fill positions requiring the exercise of much initiative or executive ability; she has little capacity

for leadership; she can think very little for herself; she follows her leaders blindly, she misses the finer shades of discrimination between right and wrong, good and bad, beautiful and ugly. But on the other hand she is more easily taught and trained, more apt to make an adjustment to her immediate social environment than is her superior sister who inclines to think for herself; by virtue of her very lack of intellectual ability she accepts things as she finds them and goes with the crowd. Literally, she is more conventional—more dependent upon the opinion of her associates or the good will of those she deems her superiors—than is the girl more liberally endowed with gray matter. The girl of average intelligence is the feminine component of that backbone without which society would disintegrate. She does more, perhaps, than any other single factor to preserve and perpetuate such social organization as the race has worked out. She can be trusted to pass on what was given her, but scarcely to elaborate and refine, and much less to improve upon it.

The girl of average intelligence who is born into a superior family has a hard time of it. She cannot comprehend the intellectual pursuits that engross her relatives, and they are apt to have scant sympathy for her "low-brow" tastes. The insistence upon intellectual accomplishments too often results in



stunting the abilities that she does possess, or in evoking a feeling of inferiority which may be the foundation of serious mental trouble.

The girl whose parents are ambitious for her, who wish to give her advantages they missed in youth, but whose ability is not able to compass the education they desire for her, is scarcely better off. Pretty little sixteen-year old Rhoda E—, the daughter of a widowed mother who wished to send her to college and who did laundry work all through the hot summer that the girl might have good clothes to enter high school, nearly broke her mother's heart by leaving at the end of the first semester and going to work in a store. The girl understood her own limitations and was firm in her decision, "What's the use?" she said to the psychologist, "I can't learn Latin and algebra, I'm too thick-headed; I've got to make a living anyway, and why should I plug for years at things I can't understand and keep my mother's nose to the grindstone to provide for me. I can make it lots easier for her by going to work, and have a sight better time myself."

When girls of average ability do continue in the higher schools for one reason or another, they are a source of difficulty for all concerned. They are pulled and pushed by their teachers and parents, they are coached and crammed, they learn to mistake

a verbal knowledge of a subject for a real understanding of it, to rely upon aids such as "ponies" and "keys" instead of wrestling with a subject to conquer it, to cheat and deceive, and to value a symbol such as a diploma or degree for itself instead of what it stands for. Their value to the community as well as their own chances of happiness are diminished rather than increased.

But what shall we say of those who fall short of average, who in maturity have minds not above the twelve- or eleven- or even ten-year level, and yet who are not feebleminded in the strict sense of the word? There are legions of these girls and the fact that their poor mental endowment is not recognized complicates the social, economic, and educational situation to an undreamed-of extent. They reach the fourth or fifth grade in school, or even the sixth or seventh, and there are stranded; they mark time, under our present system, until the legal age for leaving arrives and then crowd into industry. Every year they come out of the schools in vast numbers, girls of fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen, with the judgment and power of comprehension of children much below their years. They are loud-voiced, rude-mannered, flashily dressed, and adorned with cheap jewelry. They have learned nothing in school beyond reading and writing and the multiplication

table, and they make use of these accomplishments in reading cheap novels and the titles at the movies. Work means to them release from the hated confinement of school, money for clothes or for helping out at home, associations with their own kind without the surveillance of parents or teachers, a chance to have beaux and a good time. Children of a day, sad little butterflies, they flit about the serious business of making a living, trying first one job and then another, failing, but not disheartened; adolescent emotions run riot in them and their lack of judgment and poor powers of inhibition make them the easy prey of the cadet or procurer, or of the unscrupulous man out for a good time. Economically these girls are at the bottom of the scale; socially they are often prostitutes or the tools of brighter criminals; all investigations of delinquent girls and women have shown a large proportion to be below the average in intelligence. They marry, and their households are neglected; their daughters repeat the mothers' history. And yet they are quite capable of useful and happy lives at work suited to their abilities. When a girl of subaverage intelligence is born into a good family, carefully brought up, and trained in work she can learn to do well, she may function as a very useful member of the community.

But if there are numbers of girls below the average

in intelligence, there is also a goodly number above it, girls liberally endowed by nature, from whose ranks come the outstanding figures, the leaders, the vocal portion of femininity that so often deceives us—and itself—into thinking it is representative of all womankind. These are the girls who, dominated by intellectual interests, seek eagerly for knowledge, and can be trusted to acquire it if given the opportunity; or their interests may lie in other directions, and they become the high-salaried business women who tell us in the magazines how to succeed; the women with a taste for politics and an interest in public affairs, who put through reforms, organize and lead other women in welfare movements; the capable women in all walks of life, wives who are the unseen force behind their husbands' success, mothers who give to the world children who shape its destinies. We do not mean to imply that the sole reason for conspicuous success is superior intelligence. Life is not so simple. But intelligence is a necessary factor, without which no amount of interest, ambition, or training can avail to place the girl in the front ranks.

Recognition, however is not always accorded to women of superior intelligence. Society is not yet so organized that girls of superior mental endowment (or boys either, for that matter) have unfailing opportunity to make the most of their gifts.

Children of fine intellectual ability, reared in poverty and stunted in development, thrown into industry at the earliest possible moment and their energies absorbed in the economic struggle; daughters of the rich, reared in an atmosphere of self-indulgence and taught to look upon a brilliant marriage as the goal of their endeavors; girls hemmed in by the narrow horizon of their families and associates, their abilities unrecognized and their ambitions decried or derided—these are still the tragedies of our civilization.

The modern girl has a better chance than ever before to prove what stuff she is made of, but we are not meeting her half way. Instead of making it our business to discover her and to give her every opportunity for development and self-realization, we allow industry to exploit her, poverty to break her spirit, and our social laws to fix the limits beyond which, unless endowed with unusual abilities, she may not advance.

It may be asked how different degrees of intellectual ability may be discovered and if they are evident in infancy. The very bright child and the very dull one can usually be distinguished early, but we know little as yet about differences of endowment in the great mass of children. As a rule it is not until puberty that the average child begins to slow down.

There is not, of course, any abrupt cessation of development. We merely notice, as Mary grows older, that she does not learn as easily as she used to; her mental outlook remains narrow in spite of opportunities for its enlargement; and the school subjects which require the exercise of logical thought, such as mathematics and grammar, are exceedingly difficult for her. All teachers know the difficulties encountered in the seventh and eighth grades, difficulties which are often ascribed to the emotional developments of puberty, but which are in large measure due to the fact that many of the children are finding the subjects presented to them beyond their grasp.

It may be argued that the reason why girls do not reach a higher level of development is because we do not know how to train them to bring out their latent possibilities. We may, if we prefer, look upon intellectual endowment as a matter of special abilities and disabilities. There are girls endowed with capacity for leadership, and girls without it, girls with a talent for business, with mechanical ingenuity, with gifts in one direction or another, or "born short" in certain lines; and hitherto we have not bothered very much to find what a girl's inherent capacities or natural aptitudes were. Psychology is able to help us very greatly in this matter. It

can tell us whether or not the girl is likely to profit from advanced training, whether she has abilities essential to a musical career, whether she is likely to succeed in one or another occupation. Already in a number of industries girls are being selected for jobs or positions by means of psychological tests. We need not fear, however, that the psychologist looks forward to fitting all of us into niches by means of his tests. All our studies have shown that, given a certain general level of intelligence, there are many things in which success is possible. But certain abilities are required in certain occupations or professions, and lacking them the girl may not hope to succeed. If Mary is born short in arithmetic, for instance, she will scarcely make a statistical clerk. If the psychological service now available for defectives and delinquents could be extended to normal girls, the results would be incalculable.

We may now turn our attention to another aspect of personality, equally important in its bearing upon the use the girl is able to make of her intellectual endowment.

From time immemorial, people have been known to differ in disposition or temperament, and mothers know that these differences are discernible at a very early age. But what we have not understood until recently is their significance for mental health and

their bearing upon later development. There have been many attempts to describe and classify these traits, from the time of the earliest Greek physicians to the present; but perhaps the most useful in helping us to understand the adolescent girl is the original classification by Jung, the great Swiss psychologist, who divided people into *introverts* and *extraverts*. The introvert is the "shut-in" type, the self-centered person, who may feel deeply but finds it hard to express his feelings; he is not at his best with people and he shuns the limelight; reality seems unfriendly to him and he withdraws into himself to avoid contact with it. The extravert on the other hand is the open-natured, active personality, the good mixer, self-confident, willing to show off, the "man of affairs," outward-looking, and keenly sensitive to the effects of his actions upon other people.

It is easy to see that the extravert is the more normal type in childhood, the one usually found; and that in the course of normal development the child passes to the more self-contained and thoughtful type. Puberty sees the growth of a shyness and self-consciousness that did not exist before, a tendency to withdraw into one's self; while later adolescence returns to a more extraverted attitude, but does not normally revert to the brazen self-assertiveness and exhibitionism of childhood.



These two types are distinguishable in infancy—the solemn-eyed, quiet child, who plays quietly and prefers to be alone or with its elders, who is precocious and sensitive, frightened and shrinking from strangers; and the over-active, aggressive child, always bidding for attention and unhappy unless it is the center of things—and they require very different handling. We have said in an earlier chapter that the introverted type of personality is the one that is usually found in children who suffer a mental breakdown in adolescence; and we may add that in many neurotics we have an exaggeration of the extraverted type—the impulsive, excitable, nervous people, who seem to have no inner reserves, but are at the mercy of every wind that blows.

But, just as in each one of us there are both masculine and feminine elements, so in each there are the essential features of both introvert and extravert; and in the ideal adult personality the balance is struck between them; but actually one or the other type predominates in any given case, though it may be so overlaid with habits of thought and action and with emotional attitudes that it is the task of the expert psychologist to unravel the tangled threads of the mental life and find the underlying normal mode of reaction.

The importance of an understanding of these types

for a wise handling of the adolescent cannot be overestimated. The natural extravert, easily adaptable, spending herself lavishly, giving herself up to the claims of friends, of work, of the church, of society, and of the thousand and one things that force themselves upon her attention, is in danger of neglecting the claims of the inner life, the "multitude of subjective emotions, intentions, needs, and desires"<sup>1</sup> which are active in each one of us, as a portion of our heritage of the long, long past of the human race. She rushes from one thing to another; she never gives herself time to think; she is a little bit afraid to face her own thoughts; she snatches at the first thing that presents itself and develops habits of carelessness and inefficiency. Or she may attach herself so closely to an individual or a group that she seems to absorb that individual or group into herself and merely to reflect another's attitudes instead of developing any of her own.

Eliza K—, was a girl of this type. She was exceedingly active as a child, interested in everything about her, and learned rapidly. In college she led her classes and engaged in all the college activities, holding office in the various organizations, taking prizes in athletics, and leading debating teams and literary contests. She was also very religious, and

<sup>1</sup>JUNG, C. G., *Psychological Types*, p. 423.

her daily schedule included time for prayer and meditation, which she took ready-made from a manual of devotions. Not a moment of her time was left unaccounted for, and she drove through a fantastic amount of activity. A breakdown in her senior year frightened her, but she recovered and resumed her usual mode of life. She married soon after graduation a man much older than herself, who allowed her to continue in the career of writing and public speaking she had marked out for herself. But the needs and desires of her inner life, too long ignored and repressed, asserted themselves in the form of bizarre and peculiar wishes and actions; and in the course of a few years she became so eccentric that her career was ruined.

The introvert, on the other hand, suffers from her inability to see reality as it actually exists. Instead of being afraid of herself, she is afraid of people and even of things. They seem so different from herself that she can never quite understand them. The introversion of puberty, when a girl begins to discover herself as an individual, normally passes on to the later stage where she realizes to the full her connection with and dependence upon the world of individuals that make up society. But the introvert may never reach this stage; she may play her part out as a member of society, even as a wife and

mother, and never be able to give herself in any degree of intimacy. Secretly she is afraid even of her nearest and dearest; she builds careful barriers about her personality that no sudden invasion may catch her unaware. In proportion as the adolescent fails to extravert herself, to adapt herself to the world of reality in which she must live, does reality seem unfriendly and even terrible to her. To reach maturity a fully developed personality, with due recognition of the claims of the inner life, while adjusting herself to reality with as little friction as need be, is the psychological task that nature sets the adolescent girl.

In a further study of individual psychology Jung has shown us how the four "functions," thinking, feeling, sensation, and intuition develop in the two primary types, but for our purpose it is sufficient to leave the matter here.

But the girl brings with her into adolescence not only hereditary possibilities and general tendencies, but habits of action and emotional attitudes which vastly complicate the further problems of development. To understand and appreciate their significance we must again go back to the period of infancy, for it is in the child's relation with its parents, its experience with its brothers and sisters, its family relationships in general, that the foundations for all future relationships are laid.

Chief among the emotional attitudes that the girl brings with her from childhood is the attitude toward authority, which is a direct outgrowth of her infantile experience with her parents. She may be over-suggestible, easily led and influenced by any one who is in authority over her. We all know the docile, sheep-like people who would not for the world think of questioning anything they have been taught. These people sometimes have quite unexpected reserves of energy and intelligence and in an emergency may rise to the occasion in a way that surprises even themselves. But for the most part they are content to live their lives within bounds marked out for them, or to rely upon a stronger personality to give them the cue for their actions. On the other hand are those rebellious natures that are always the party of the opposition. Restraint, commands, prohibitions, are like stinging whips to them. Authority and government, no matter how efficient, call forth efforts on their part to escape. In every situation that requires their recognition of authority they act like stubborn children defying their parents. In either case these people have carried into maturity their infantile reactions toward their parents, have transformed their childish feelings toward the father or mother into an attitude toward life. It is easy to see in the former case the child whose "will was

conquered," who was controlled and guided, and her efforts to think or act for herself thwarted until she learned to proceed along the line of least resistance; while in the latter case we see the child who has rebelled against parents too harsh or unloving, parents who may have compelled her to yield to their superior force but have left her with a hatred of authority that spreads out over every situation in which authority is a factor. Or the authority may have been persistent but not harsh, as in the former case, and yet the girl herself of the type who could not submit happily. Many of the most persevering trouble makers in school or industry, the girls who "will not be bossed," can be understood as those who have had such unwise handling in childhood.

The sense of inferiority is another emotional attitude that is enormously potent in its influence upon development. The child who for any reason feels herself inferior reacts by an effort toward "compensation." The little girl who has a physical deformity or who is the plain one in a family of brothers and sisters develops qualities which tend to make up for her deficiency. If she has a good mind she may shine in intellectual pursuits, or she may strive to excel in sports and games. She may adopt the attitude of an invalid and claim care and attention because of her frailty. The inferiority may be mental,

and she develops an attitude of bluster and defiance which deceives people into attention toward her conduct instead of her poor ability; or she acquires a sweetness and an appeal that secures for her far more attention than her personality deserves.

Sometimes the effort at compensation becomes a "vaulting ambition that o'erleaps itself," like one who, springing out of the way of one danger, falls into another; we then have an "over-compensation," and many disagreeable traits in girls will be found to be, upon analysis, an effort, even though unconscious, to make up for or cover the absence of something in their own natures.

But when all is said it is the development of the instinctive life that gives to adolescence its peculiar character. The time has come for the girl's love-life to reach its full development, in the sense that her chief interest is no longer centered in herself or in those of her own sex but is directed outward toward the potential mate. We have seen how, in late childhood and early adolescence, the fancy plays about love situations and the strength of her newly awakened feelings combined with her undeveloped judgment may lead the girl into situations which she afterwards deeply regrets. "Crushes," "affairs," and ardent love scenes occupy her thoughts, even if she has no opportunity actually to experience

them. In this period she is often "boy crazy" and a source of great anxiety to her friends.

Normally as she grows older, the heightened tension of early adolescence subsides, her fancies become less self-centered, her ripening judgment and broadening interest make her less liable to emotional outbreaks and silly escapades. And yet there are great differences among girls who can only be called normal. In some the homosexual stage lasts far into adolescence; Dr. H. C. Miller<sup>1</sup> puts its upper limit in English girls of the boarding-school class at eighteen; while in others a definite interest in boys awakens very early, and the girl may never thereafter care much for association with her own sex—she is, as we say, a "man's woman."

How much these attitudes are fostered by training and environment and how much they are a matter of innate endowment we are not yet able to say. Certainly some girls are much more attractive to men than others—an attraction which does not depend upon looks, temperament, or character.

However, consciously or unconsciously, the aim of adolescence from the primitive instinctive standpoint is to seek and to find the mate. But in our civilization, nature cannot be left alone to bring

<sup>1</sup>*The New Psychology and the Teacher*, p. 96. See reference at end of Chapter VI.



the instincts to fruition in her own time and way. The history of cultural civilization is largely the history of the repression of the crude and instinctive urge towards reproduction. As long as man's energies were consumed in satisfying the instinctive demands of his nature, little else was possible. To get food and shelter from storms or enemies and to find a mate at all costs occupied most of the waking hours of primitive man. But woman, with the little helpless creature clinging to her who for months on end had to be fed from her breast and sheltered and protected from enemies and who, even when it could walk, still had to be guarded and guided and taught to find food and defend itself, must early have taken the first steps toward "sublimation" or the using up of energy which would naturally expend itself in sex activity in activities the aim of which was the protection and care of others. Thus altruism developed, the capacity to forego pleasure for the sake of others; and thus came agriculture, and the tending of flocks and herds, and crude attempts at art, and the beginnings of barter which in time developed into trade and commerce, as expressions of the force of the creative instinct when turned aside from its primitive object. And as more and more of the creative energy began to be turned into these channels barriers began to be set up

against the sex instinct; the "incest barrier" is found among practically all peoples—the forbidding of marriage with near relatives, and finally with members of the clan or tribe; marriage came to be hedged round with all sorts of restrictions, and sex relations must receive the sanction of the State and the Church.

Then came the movement for the emancipation of woman, as a sequel to the wave of democracy which has swept Western nations in the last three hundred years—the demand for freedom of life and action, for opportunity for the girl to develop her own individuality as freely as her brother develops his.

All this reacts mightily upon the girl of today. Though biologically and historically adolescence is the period of mating, the time when she is urged most strongly by nature to submit herself to the service of the race, yet marriage must be delayed. For practically the first time in the history of the race she has the whole period of prematurity in which to make preparation for her life tasks. From being merely a woman, the carrier of life's torch, whose primary purpose and function is sex, she has become an individual, a personality, a human being with duties and relationships which lie apparently far outside the primary realm of sex. The social *milieu* focuses her attention upon those other aspects of life, and the

instinctive urge is put as far away from her consciousness as possible. To develop her own individuality, to get and to have and to be for her own sake, to make a career for herself or to attain a coveted position, becomes her conscious aim, and marriage and motherhood are postponed. The psychic struggle thus set up is often prolonged and severe, even though largely unconscious. For herself, or for the race—that is the choice with which, whether meaning it or not, our modern world too often confronts her. But nature, who from the moment of her birth has destined the girl for her own purposes, in this matter can scarcely be outwitted.

And so in the normal, healthy girl we must expect an interest in the opposite sex to take precedence of everything else, whether she admits it or no. She may have many men friends or center her affection upon one; or she may set her mark high and dream of an ideal mate, but always, consciously or unconsciously, the instinctive drive is there, coloring her thoughts, shaping her ambitions, prompting her actions, making of adolescence what it is.

These are some of the things that we may expect to find in the normal girl, some of the things we must understand if we are going to help instead of hinder her further development. To apprehend her as an individual, to discover her native endowment, her

abilities and disabilities, her traits and tendencies and emotional attitudes, her physical equipment and potentialities; to recognize the instinctive drive which colors her thoughts and gives force and meaning to her actions—these are tasks we must set ourselves to if we are to admit her to the full measure of her inheritance in the modern world.

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## CHAPTER VI

### TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Adolescence, as we have seen, is the final stage of individual development, the last step in the growing-up process. How the girl is to develop during this period, what she is to be at its close, is dependent upon her original inheritance and the training and experiences of her earlier years. No scheme of education which ignores these facts can hope to be successful. As parents and teachers we are prone to look forward to the woman of the future, to measure the girl by what we wish her to become, instead of discovering what she is at present and accepting that as our guide in further efforts in her behalf. Before we devise ways and means, before we decide upon schools and plan for the future, we must look at her with unbiased eyes. What are her potentialities and possibilities, physically, mentally, emotionally? What twists of development has she suffered, what traits and attitudes has she developed? The matter of first concern, in a consideration of education for the adolescent girl, is the girl herself.

We will inquire first, perhaps, to what physical type she belongs and govern her hygienic regime by

what we discover. Is she thin, long limbed, flat chested, or inclined to stockiness, solidly built, with limbs short in proportion to her body? The rangy, boyish figure, with small hips and flat chest is much in fashion at the present moment, and the girl of different type is apt to be loath to accept her difference and to attempt imitation of her slender sister instead of developing her own possibilities. Grave harm may result thereby, for the same physical regime cannot with advantage be adhered to for all types. Above all things we must avoid fads of food and exercise. To hold a group of girls of varying physical types to the same diet and put them all through the same gymnastic stunts is folly in the highest degree. The girl of long limbs and short body, in whom the alimentary canal is short and the heart and lungs comparatively small, needs highly concentrated, nourishing foods, and feats of endurance are beyond her. She cannot swim so far, nor dance so long, nor play such strenuous basket ball or tennis as her more robust sister. ✓ Games and sports must be adapted to her, she must learn to recognize her limitations in this respect as definitely as in matters of dress. On the other hand, the full-chested girl, with short limbs and a body long in proportion, has plenty of lung space and normally a good circulatory system; she is the long-distance swimmer, the champion at tennis, the star

in feats of endurance. Her physical sins are apt to be dietetic; she it is who needs the vegetables and bulky foods, the larger quantities of fruit and water which the popular magazines urge us all to consume. She is too apt to starve herself and in her ignorance to deprive her body of the very foods it is best fitted to assimilate.

We are all too slowly learning that the human organism is a unit, and that we cannot separate the mental or "spiritual" from the physical. Healthy minds are found in healthy bodies, and sick souls manifest themselves in bodily diseases. The old mediaeval distinction between body and soul, the body as a thing of evil, and the soul shining brighter as the body was despised, has no place in our modern thinking. The first task of education is the provision of an environment in which the body can thrive and develop its highest possibilities, and to do this we must know the girl's physical needs and abilities. Careful examinations at regular intervals, from infancy on, are necessary to provide this knowledge. To wait until a girl is actually ill before she has the benefit of a thorough physical overhauling is a most short-sighted attitude. All too often defects are discovered which may cost much time and money to correct, but which might have been prevented had they been discovered in their beginnings. The war

brought forcibly home to us the physical state of our population, but we are in danger already of forgetting the lesson. Child-welfare centers and school physicians are steps in the right direction, but much more remains to be done before all girls are provided with the care and attention necessary to insure their proper physical development.

The psychological type may next engage our attention. Is the normal introversion of early adolescence, the shyness and sensitiveness, the tendency to daydreaming, in danger of becoming too pronounced, or is the girl, in childhood already too self-centered and solitary, withdrawing more and more into herself and showing less and less interest in reality? In each of us, we have learned, there exists the tendency to both attitudes, the introverted and the extraverted. To free the unduly introverted girl from her fear of reality, to give her a chance to find herself in relation to others, is a task by no means easy of accomplishment. Her confidence must be gained, and if possible she must be led to unburden herself, for these shy and sensitive souls have always tender consciences and brood over their shortcomings to an extent hard to realize. Such a girl cannot be forced or driven; sarcasm only sends her deeper within herself. The world appears too harsh and unfriendly to her as it is; if she is to take her place in it at last with a



fair degree of efficiency and comfort it must be made attractive to her. We must find the things in which she can succeed, which she can do as well or better than her mates. We must encourage her efforts with lavish praise and disregard her failures. The girl of this type who has no special talents or urge toward self-expression is apt to be overlooked in school or other social group. She is "a quiet little mouse." "You never know she is there," and her mates have no appreciation of the effect upon her of their neglect or thoughtless cruelty. Her efforts to extravert herself, to act and be like other girls, may be ludicrous or silly because she does not see things from quite the same angle. She is apt to think out a course of action for herself and then carry it through without regard to conditions which call for modifications of her plan. If we are to avoid a future breakdown, we must make every effort to cultivate her social instincts, to give her self-confidence and assurance; and above all we must avoid coddling and sheltering her as strenuously as we avoid harshness and sarcasm. It is often wise for a girl of this type to be sent away from home in early adolescence, as an anxious mother, driving her to attempt things she cannot do, reproaching for failures, or petting and sympathizing instead of stimulating and encouraging, is an effective barrier to her normal development.

On the other hand is the girl still childishly extraverted in adolescence, with the naïve egotism and the selfish demand for attention and privileges of childhood, self-assertive and anxious to show off? In this case, she may be of corresponding mental development; the childish personality persists because the mental outlook is still that of childhood. But not always; the girl whose parents have been glad to keep her still a child, who have consistently relieved her of responsibility and allowed her to have her own way, is apt to have a childish emotional life no matter how good her mentality is. But there is another danger connected with extraversion. It is the type that receives social approval, especially in this country, and the tendencies we most deplore in our youth at the present day are indubitably fostered by our social *milieu*. Our ideal is "the man of action," "the good mixer;" our watchword is "get things done;" our ambition is speed, and ever more speed; the brighter the lights, the louder the noise, the faster the pace, the more we think we are accomplishing. We have no time for the claims of the inner life. Small wonder is it that our children, breathing from infancy such an atmosphere, launch out earlier and with more vigor than we wish them to.

✓ To counteract the tendency to undue extraversion in such an atmosphere is an herculean task. Even

the normal introversion of early adolescence is apt to be quite swamped, and the girl carried forward on a wave of activity which begins in childhood. Gone is the young girl of a few years ago, who throughout childhood and well on into adolescence lived simply and quietly, looking forward to her coming-out party as the beginning of "real living;" the debutante's activities often cover as wide a range as her debutante sister's, and she is blasé and discontented by the time maturity is reached. It takes time to develop the inner life, to become acquainted with ourselves and those inner forces whose power we instinctively guess to be so great. But if the girl is to attain to the full measure of self-realization which is her birth-right, we must take the time to develop her inner resources. We cannot do this by preaching at her or by forcible restraint of her activities. It is of small value that the body is quiet while the mind races and fumes. We must surround her with an atmosphere of quiet, accustom her from childhood to periods of quietude and repose. By questions and by respectful listening to her opinions we must encourage her to think for herself. Contact with nature and with the riches of art and literature will broaden her interests and help her to understand herself.

In proportion as parents are themselves extraverted will they fail to see the value of such training;

but for this misunderstanding and this lack of opportunity for self-knowledge, nature will take her revenge. Unhappy lives, stunted or undeveloped abilities, blind and wasteful seeking for outlets for the instinctive urges within, breakdowns in increasing numbers are but the price we pay for our lack of inner harmony.

In the majority of cases, however, the features of neither extraversion nor introversion are marked; the girl appears to us a bundle of habits and emotional attitudes, some of them good, from the adult standpoint, and some of them bad. Their goodness or badness, however, must be decided from the standpoint of their psychological value. In removing what seems to us a bad habit we may only make room for a worse one, or remove a very necessary prop to the girl's personality. Suggestibility and lack of self-reliance are bad traits in a girl of good mentality, but in a girl of inferior intelligence they may be turned to good account. Indeed, a girl of poor mentality can be trusted with self-reliance only up to a certain point; beyond that she must look to her superiors for guidance. Again, self-assertion and defiance of authority may be only the natural reaction to too strict parental discipline; or it may be a means of concealment of a real or fancied inferiority. Jealousy and suspicion of others' motives may be the

outcome of unfortunate experiences, or they may be traits deeply rooted in the personality, expressive of a "twist" in development which is likely to balk all ordinary methods of training and attempts at understanding. In general, unpleasant traits and disagreeable habits may be more or less superficial, the result of careless training or of indifferent standards in the girl's environment; or they may go deeper and be entrenched in the very foundations of personality.

When a girl fails to respond to all ordinary methods of training, especially when group sentiment makes no impression upon her, and she continues conspicuously different from the other girls of the group, we may feel reasonably sure that we are dealing with no ordinary habits, but with character traits too firmly fixed to be easily altered by adolescent training.

During the early adolescent years, when the emotions are at high tide and the girl is a mystery to herself, all traits are apt to be exaggerated, and now one type of reaction and now the other may predominate, called forth by the various personalities with whom she is in contact, or by inner moods the origins of which are unknown even to the girl herself. These swings of the pendulum are entirely normal and we may not accuse her of fickleness; self-consistency

and steadiness of purpose are not traits of early adolescence, however desirable it may be to cultivate them.

But if knowledge of the physical type and the personality trends is essential for education, understanding of the mental status and the probabilities of intellectual development is equally important. The girl's primary intellectual endowment conditions everything we do for her and everything we may expect of her future. In all our talk of self-development and self-realization, of releasing locked-up energy, and removing barriers to the development of the instinctive life we must not forget this fact.

If it is folly to expect all girls to profit by the same physical regime, it is equally folly to expect of all the same response to mental discipline. Parents are often fearful of allowing a bright girl to progress as fast as she is able in school; they have been told that her health will suffer or that she will break down from overwork. They insist that she be held back, and so the life-energy, which has been seeking to express itself at higher levels, finds other outlets; the girl takes refuge in phantasy, spends her time in reading, or devotes herself to mischief, tormenting teachers and breaking school rules.

An interesting example of parental misunderstanding of her real mental ability was Laura W—,

brought to court at the age of twelve by her distracted mother, who declared that she was incorrigible. Laura was a large, well-developed girl, dressed like a young lady, and appearing many years older than twelve. She was in the seventh grade at school but she had latterly refused to attend, contemptuously referring to her classmates as "little kids," and, when her mother had insisted upon attendance, upsetting the entire school by her defiance of the teacher and inciting the other children to mischief. By this means she had managed to get herself expelled, and she then "borrowed" money from her mother's pocketbook, bought clothes and dressed herself as a young lady, ran away to Boston, and sought employment as a chorus girl. At this juncture she was apprehended by the police and returned to her mother, who now appealed to the Court for help in the problem of Laura. The psychologist found the twelve-year-old girl to have the mental and emotional development of sixteen. The children in her class were indeed little kids as compared with her. Her lessons were child's play, and the humdrum of the school was intolerable to her. It was recommended that she be placed in the eighth grade and tutored in algebra with a view to high school in the fall, but the mother objected; Laura was not old enough for high school, and she

did not wish her to associate with the high-school girls who were going with boys and conducting themselves like young ladies. "She will not be old enough for high school for two years," she said; "I don't believe in pushing children ahead in school, it is bad for their health and makes them grow up too soon." She could not see that Laura was already grown up and that no amount of wishing on her mother's part could set back her development.

We have already spoken of the frequency with which childish traits, fostered by an unwise attitude on the part of parents, may mask a girl's real mental ability. The harm that may be done by trying to keep the girl still a child when the time for leaving childhood behind has arrived, cannot be too strongly emphasized. The traits that parents most deplore in a girl, her vagaries of mood, her defiance of authority and insistence upon her own way, her lack of interest in the things they wish her to be interested in, are symptoms of the struggle to assert her own individuality and break the bonds of childhood. If too much energy must be employed in this struggle, it is withdrawn from other directions whence it normally seeks an outlet.

Mina C—, an energetic little miss of fifteen, who had always stood high in her classes, bade fair to fail in the second year of junior high school. To the



sympathetic teacher she divulged the fact that her lessons no longer interested her. "I try as hard as ever," she said, "but I can't keep my mind on them." "What do you think of, Mina, when you sit trying to get your Latin lesson?" "Oh, mostly the things mother won't let me do, and how we quarrel about it, and," she hung her head with flaming cheeks, "I'm so ashamed, I don't want to hurt her feelings, but I do, and I can't seem to help it, and it takes the pep right out of me."

Perhaps even more frequently we meet the girl whose parents cannot understand her lack of mental ability and who insist upon her doing things that are really beyond her powers of accomplishment. How many girls are kept droning away at music lessons who will never be able to appreciate anything more musical than jazz; how many are sent to boarding schools and coached and tutored in an effort to supply the brains which nature denied them; how many are kept in school at the cost of infinite worry and labor on the part of parents, only to fail or to cheat their way through, and to forget as quickly as possible everything they were supposed to have learned, can only be guessed at.

We have noted elsewhere that in the girl of inferior intelligence the childish attitude toward reality is apt to persist. The suggestibility and

dependence upon authority, the childish vanity and love of display, the eagerness for commendation are normal accompaniments of the childish mental level. But forced to attempt tasks beyond her powers, she may react with sullenness and stubbornness, or develop an attitude of boastfulness, of aggression and defiance of authority which is best understood as an attempt at compensation, an effort to "put herself across;" instinctively she develops an attitude whereby she can gain attention and make her presence felt.

Daisy L— was a girl of this type whose inferior mental equipment was lost sight of in her general misconduct. She was sixteen, a slight little creature, with apparently a vast deal of energy which she devoted to anything rather than her school work. She had been a failure in the grades but had been promoted to high school chiefly on the strength of her record in athletics, and in the hope that she might find school life more interesting. But Daisy continued exceedingly troublesome, refusing to study, deliberately breaking rules, and stirring up trouble by her tales of teachers' partiality and students' misconduct. When educational tests were introduced in the schools, Daisy's average was that of a sixth-grade pupil, and her school record indicated that she had never been able really to accomplish more.

It is indeed hard for parents to accept the idea that their daughter is of inferior mental endowment, and they are quite justified in giving her every possible chance before attributing her failures to lack of mental ability. But on the other hand, there are schools and "doctors" of various sorts only too ready to promise miracles for a large enough fee. It is entirely possible at present for a competent psychologist to determine the girl's abilities, and she will be far happier, and society's interests will be better served by her being enabled to develop what ability she has; no school, no matter what its methods or its claims, can do more than this.

A discussion of reform in education is no part of the purpose of this book, but after an experience of fifteen years in the school room and seven years of dealing with social failures in court, correctional institution, and hospital the writer is convinced that the thing most needed in education is a better grasp of individual psychology. We spend time in the discussion of principles, aims, and methods; we equip our school rooms with costly devices to make teaching effective and learning easy; we follow fads of various sorts; schools of widely differing principles and practice turn out pupils who seem to justify their claims of having found the true method in education. Human nature is extraordinarily plastic,

especially child nature, and it is easy to deceive ourselves into thinking we can mould it to our liking. But in after years the results of widely differing educational systems are pretty much alike. For after all, the school, though it may restrain and control and shape conduct for the time being, is only one factor in education, and rarely the dominant one. The child comes to it with character already shaped and personality trends established, to say nothing of the limitations of intelligence; the school can only build upon what is already there. How very important it is, then, for it to discover first of all the child's capabilities and potentialities, in order that time may not be wasted in attempting to make of her something that nature never intended, while overlooking the points at which she is most capable of being influenced.

In our faith in principles and methods we are prone to overlook the most important thing in education—the personality of the teacher. The child learns most from and is most influenced by the teacher to whom she makes the most effective “transfer;” not the one for whom she forms a sentimental attachment that may result only in distracting her attention from her work, but the one to whom she unconsciously transfers the attitude of implicit confidence and dependent love which she earlier

gave to her mother. Especially in adolescence, when the girl discovers that her own mother, instead of being the wonderful creature of her infantile fancy, is merely a woman and one who is standing in the way of her own developing individuality, does she transfer her earlier attitude of confidence and sympathy to a teacher. Thus it is that seeming miracles happen in education. The girl who was developing an attitude of aggression and defiance, who was losing interest in her work and devoting her energies to circumventing her parents' wishes, drops the disagreeable traits like a cloak and begins living up to her teacher's expectations. What has really happened is familiar to all mental physicians; just as the patient puts the doctor in the parent's place—becomes a little child in his unconscious relationship to him, to be led and guided—so the girl has found a mother substitute and joyfully begins again the process of building up her personality under the guidance of the beloved teacher. Such a teacher makes a permanent impression upon the girl's life, unifying and giving direction to the streams of energy which, beginning to forsake the childish channels, are in danger of dissipation. She is a link in the chain of the girl's development, a bridge over which the girl may safely pass from the dependence of childhood to the confidence and self-direction of womanhood.

The girl of superior ability, whose interests are dominantly intellectual, finds the higher schools congenial to her, and she may go on to the technical or professional school or university. Whatever her interests or whatever she seeks in the way of knowledge or training she may find if she has the means. But the girl of average ability, whose interests are not intellectual and who learns by seeing and handling things, finds high school a bore and only to be endured, if at all, because her parents insist or because her friends are there. Her thoughts are occupied by parties, beaux, and the latest star in the movies; her ideals are being shaped by the monthly magazine and the popular novel. The school is too slow for her; why, she reasons, should she stay in school and drone over dead languages and ancient history when life is moving at such a rapid pace outside; she wants to get into it, to feel the exhilaration of being a part of the vast throng that is moving, always moving, though its objectives are by no means clear. We strive to keep her in school by organizing courses in household arts, in sewing and millinery, and in business; junior high schools attempt to bridge the gap between the eighth grade and the high school, alternatives and electives are allowed, sports and athletics become creditable subjects; so that it is becoming more and more possible

for a girl to graduate from high school with almost no knowledge of the subjects that, only a few years ago, formed the backbone of the high-school course; and even under these conditions, the majority of girls do not complete a full course and graduate from high school. And why not? Primarily, because the high school is unsuited to their intellectual development; we feel that somehow children should be made to conform to standards, that high-school instruction should be upon a relatively high plane, and we succeed in putting it beyond their grasp.

If we are to give the average girl a square deal in the schools, we must realize that her intellectual development begins to slow down at puberty and that by the age of fifteen or sixteen she has reached what is practically adult stature so far as her intelligence is concerned. The things we do for her in the way of vocational training and guidance must begin before this age; her aptitudes and abilities must be discovered, her strong points developed, and her weak points strengthened. And if we keep her in school beyond this age, we must see to it that her work not only holds her interest but appeals to her as really worth while. In some of the larger cities and the more progressive smaller ones programs such as those outlined above are being adopted in the schools, and their success not only in holding the child's interest

but in developing her abilities and sending her out with something of real social value in her possession, has justified our highest expectations. But the introduction of such programs comes slowly. It is hard for us, who were brought up on the theory that the object of education is the acquisition of knowledge, to accept the idea that its aim is primarily self-realization, and that much that we have considered essential for the child to know is of little value to her.

Toward the girl of subaverage intelligence our obligation is still greater. We compel her to stay in school long after her ability to profit from ordinary school work has ceased; her intellectual interests are practically nonexistent, and her abilities lie almost wholly along manual lines. It is entirely possible, with the methods now available, to recognize this girl far down in the grades, and in many cases at school entrance, and our efforts should be devoted to helping her realize her possibilities and not to pushing her through a certain number of grades.

For increasing numbers of girls adolescence brings with it the practical question of choosing a means of livelihood. A few generations ago the training of a girl of the middle class was directed toward but one end—the making of an efficient housewife or home maker. She must be proficient in all the household



arts—spinning, weaving, sewing, the preservation and preparation of food, the care of the house; her own home was the school in which she learned all this and her mother was the teacher. Now, however, the trend of social evolution is distinctly away from the woman's preoccupation with the affairs of the house. Years ago the household arts were removed from the home to the factory, and much of woman's traditional occupation is gone. With it has gone a great deal of the interest that bound the girl to her home. Labor-saving machinery, delicatessen shop, and department store make her mother's housekeeping easy, unless she is burdened with ill health or an unusually large family; and, even in cases where the girl's earnings are not needed, it is more and more the custom for her to seek a job or a position in which she may expend some of the energy which in former days would have been confined within the four walls of her home. A job of her own is a long step toward that freedom and independence of action that the normal girl craves, and many girls choose their vocations and plan their career as earnestly as their brothers do. An increasing number of our higher schools and colleges are recognizing this and providing vocational counselors or some form of vocational guidance for girls as well as for boys.

Many girls, however, are exceedingly difficult to place in a vocation because they have no preferences and cannot make up their minds what they want to do. The parents or the counselor feel that a girl is wasting time when she tries first one thing and then another, but it is far better for her to spend a few years in finding herself in relation to work than to give her time to an occupation in which she is unhappy or for which she feels herself unsuited. "Happy is that man who has found his work," work suited to his powers, work to which he can bring spontaneous interest, and from which he can experience joy in the product of his labor. But such work as this is not chosen by parents or vocational counselor and thrust upon the girl willy nilly. (In this connection the words of Dr. White<sup>1</sup> are pertinent. When we have regard, he says, to "the infinite complexity of the adult character, depending as it does upon the interplay of so many forces," we will "be prepared for the conclusion that vocations cannot wisely be chosen for others. The effort to do this is pretty apt to be little more than a suggestion along the lines of our own prejudices and predilections, and so can only be doomed to failure.")

<sup>1</sup>WHITE, WM. A., "Psychoanalysis and Vocational Guidance," in the *Psychoanalytic Review* for July, 1923.

Rather is the vocation discovered after a careful study of her tastes and aptitudes and a survey of the different occupations open to her in her community. If she is fortunate enough to be able to spend time preparing for one of the higher occupations or professions, she need not be limited to her home community as a vocational field.

But for the thousands upon thousands of girls who must go to work in early adolescence or who tire of school and insist upon leaving the moment they can get their working papers the problem is somewhat different. Most of these girls must stay at home, at least for several years, and work must be found which they can do and which is available in their particular community. The need for careful study of the girl, however, her abilities, her tastes and aptitudes, is just as great as in the case of her more fortunate schoolmates. She may possess unsuspected talents which would waste and languish in the atmosphere of mill or factory or shop; or she may be the type of girl to whom the work itself makes little difference and the wage is all important.

A great many studies of working girls and women as well as the vocations in which women usually engage have been made in recent years. And our psychological studies have given us a means of discovering the range of the girl's abilities so that the

old wasteful method of trying her in first one place and then another until one was found that was suited to her abilities has no longer any excuse—except the lack of trained workers to study her.

There are many other questions that confront us in a consideration of training and education in adolescence. Chief among these is the question of sex education and the training of the girl for marriage and motherhood. What attitude are we to take toward the sex side of life and the girl's potential motherhood?

From what has been said in earlier chapters we can see that the need for sex instruction does not begin in adolescence. There could be no more mistaken practice than that of leaving any mention of the sex side of life until puberty approaches, or, as often happens, until the first menstruation appears.

The time to begin sex instruction is when the child first asks questions, and whatever the manner of its presentation she is entitled to the truth and not to fairy tales. Nor can she always be trusted to draw correct inferences from analogies with plant and animal life; the plain truth in as simple a manner as possible is her right. No one but the psychiatrist, perhaps, who deals with broken spirits and wrecked lives, knows the harm that results from false and ignorant attitudes toward sex. We are

ourselves so filled with hypocrisy, so much the victims of repressions and inhibitions that it is small wonder we find it difficult to instruct our daughters and desire some one else, teacher or physician, to do it.

No matter what we think of the "new psychology," we owe it an everlasting debt of gratitude for freeing us from the bonds of superstition regarding sex. Not as something low and vulgar, our "animal nature" forever struggling to drag us down, nor as something too high and holy, forever in danger of being profaned, are we to regard it, but as a natural, normal function, the proper use of which can bring dignity and beauty beyond all compare to human life.

One of the vexing questions of sex instruction relates to masturbation. Until recently we have heard lurid tales about its consequences, and idiocy, epilepsy, and insanity were supposed to be caused by it; we now know that it is so common at puberty that it can only be called normal. Nevertheless it is not a habit that we wish the girl to form. Its danger lies not in any direct physical consequence but in the centering of her love-life in herself so that the normal attitude toward the opposite sex is not developed. In many a girl the habit persists until long past puberty, or even until marriage, with little

knowledge of its real meaning or undesirability; and when such is the case the marriage is almost sure to be disastrous.

A striking example was Mona M—, who came to the writer's attention at the age of twenty-four, after three years of married life. She had been in a depression for more than a year, in and out of sanitariums, improving but slightly. She had lost all interest in life, lay about in a half doze much of the time, and had spells of violent weeping. To her husband and family she offered no further explanation than that she had ruined her life and that there was nothing to be done about it. The husband knew nothing further than that marriage had been distasteful to her from the beginning. She had been apparently almost totally ignorant of what it implied, and the husband had tried to be patient with her but she had not succeeded in adjusting herself to any appreciable degree. The two young people were bright and capable, interested in the same things and apparently well suited to each other; they had been deeply in love; but in spite of all this the marriage seemed doomed to failure. It took some time to get Mona's confidence, but when this was accomplished almost immediately there tumbled forth a tale which racked her so in the telling that her screams could be heard all over the wing of the

hospital. She had been brought up simply and strictly by religious parents, given high ideals, and apparently started out in life under auspicious circumstances. She had, however, had no sex instruction whatever, and having a good deal of native modesty had sought no information from her sisters or playmates. She had learned to masturbate at puberty and continued the habit throughout adolescence with no conscious idea of what it meant or that it might be harmful. When she married the knowledge of sex relations came as a great shock to her, and she could not believe that what had always seemed to her a strictly private and personal affair could be the foundation of marriage. It seemed almost impossible that a bright girl could be so ignorant, and so her husband thought. She had several hysterical outbursts during the first two years of marriage and he lost patience, telling her that through her foolishness she was ruining both their lives. About this time Mona got hold of some literature on sex which painted the results of masturbation in lurid hues. Insanity and epilepsy were traced to it. In her nervous condition this was the last straw and she went into the depressed state in which she arrived at the hospital. After a few weeks' residence, during which time she was taught what she should have known before marriage, built up

physically, and reassured on the subject of her difficulty, she returned home, and there has been no return of the depression in nearly three years, the two young people now being happy and apparently well adjusted to each other.

In instruction upon the subject of masturbation care should be taken to avoid frightening the girl or placing too great emphasis upon it. Childhood is the time for such instruction, before the tremendous emotional significance that adolescence attaches to sex has developed. A common-sense attitude will avoid threats and severe punishments, for a sensitive child may be seriously injured by them; a great number of cases have been reported in which illness in an adult was traced back to some fright or shock over this matter in childhood. The little girl should be taught from the beginning to handle her sex organs only when necessary for cleanliness, and to seek help from her mother if she finds herself tempted to do otherwise.

Puberty brings with it also the homosexual danger. The flood of new emotions which enriches the girl's life flows out upon all her relationships, and sentimental and romantic attachments take the place of her little-girl friendships. A great deal of this is natural and normal, and the girl without her quota of chums and intimate friends, her club mates,



or sorority sisters, misses one of the chief delights of girlhood. But when the friendship becomes too passionate, when the girls cannot meet without kisses and long embraces, or when they become absorbed in each other to the exclusion of other interests it is time to call a halt. The best safeguard against such experiences is a wide field of interests, so that the girl has a number of outlets for her energy. She should have boy friends as well as girl friends, and, as has been stated in an earlier chapter, the attitude of her father, his interest in and attention to her, is of prime importance in helping her to develop normally.

One hesitates to instruct a girl in the likelihood of homosexual experiences, and yet in our society, where girls have such freedom of association, and where the homosexual woman who does not hesitate at seduction is found more or less frequently, some knowledge is necessary for her own protection. A girl should be taught to avoid the woman who is always attempting to fondle her, who wishes to give her presents, or appears unduly fond of her on short acquaintance. Nothing could be more pernicious than our habit of teaching children that they must respect and obey older people. Only when age is worthy and noble does it deserve respect. Nor should the subject of homosexuality be made too

mysterious and mentioned in vague terms which only serve to rouse the girl's curiosity. In this, as in other matters of sex, she is entitled to the truth.

But the real danger from homosexuality lies not in actual sex association but in homosexual attitudes toward life. In our civilization, where increasing numbers of women remain unmarried and must compete with men in the industrial and professional fields, this is a very real danger. The girl has no time nor opportunity for normal associations with the opposite sex; work or study absorbs her energies, and she finds her friends among her girl associates, or cultivates friendships with interesting women. Her associations with men in office, shops, or factory show up their weaknesses and she shrinks more and more from social contact with them. Her world becomes a woman's world, her standards and ideals are feminine, and less and less is she able to envisage reality as it actually exists. She is loudest in her denunciation of masculine vices, surest of her own disillusionment; she seeks an outlet for her repressed sexuality in the pursuit of truth under strange guises, fads, and new religious, social, and political reforms, the real implications of which she grasps but feebly; and soon a normal approach to the problems of life becomes for her impossible. The roots of this attitude, as we have seen, lie back in childhood;

the homosexual woman is a childish personality, unable to let go of the hands that held her so securely in childhood, afraid to trust herself unreservedly to the life-forces that well within her.

The homosexual attitude is not, as we often hear asserted, the outgrowth of our industrial civilization; it is no doubt fostered and increased by it, but today, as always, the girl with a strong enough interest in men will find opportunity for association with them. The real causes of homosexuality lie in the hypocrisy of our moral code and in our lack of understanding of the psychology of sexual development.

When we come to instruction in regard to relations between the sexes, we find it difficult indeed to begin in adolescence. The riot of feeling which is the normal accompaniment of puberty invests the subject with an emotional significance that is fatal to its calm consideration. Every psychiatrist knows many women who, first coming in contact with the facts of sex association and venereal disease at adolescence, suffered a shock which colored their whole afterlives.<sup>1</sup> In the majority of cases adolescence is too late. Knowledge of some sort has

<sup>1</sup>A very important study of this subject was made in Pittsburgh in 1915. See "The Psychological Influence upon Adolescent Girls of the Knowledge of Prostitution and Venereal Disease," Miriam C. Gould in *Social Hygiene*, Vol. II, No. 2, April 1916, pp. 191-205.

already been obtained, and from improper sources. The child who has her first questions answered without any show of embarrassment or hedging, and who is assured that her mother is prepared to give her any information she may require, is least likely to seek for it in undesirable ways. Unfortunately mothers are seldom prepared to deal with the subject in such a manner; let us hope that the girls of today, the mothers of tomorrow, will find it easier to look at the facts of life with open eyes.

In this connection it is well to remember that it is as unwise to surround the subject with fear as it is with mystery. Girls have no more need to be afraid of boys than boys of girls; what we are always afraid of is really ourselves and our own inability to handle a situation. Every girl who is honest with herself knows that it is she who sets the key for her relationship with men. Consciously or unconsciously she attracts them or repels them, and in nearly all sex situations, whether they realize it or not, they but play up to her lead. And there is even less need to fear that, so long as love remains what it is, any knowledge can rob it of its glamour or its mystery.

But it is not knowledge alone, in this nor in anything else, that leads to power. Knowledge is a dangerous thing in the hands of those unfitted to use it. Self-control and the sense of responsibility

must go hand in hand with it. "We need," says Havelock Ellis,<sup>1</sup> in discussing the question of sex education, "education from the earliest years in all those matters of sex which all need to know, and such education must not be mere instruction but a slow training of emotions and ideas in the face of the real facts of life. We need sound economic conditions and wholesome surroundings, so that none needs be forced on downward paths. We need to cultivate the sense of responsibility and the power of self-control" (in both boys and girls). "Along these lines we may hope to make it easier for both sexes alike to attain the power of self-protection amid the inevitable risks of life."

Here is where the idea of *sublimation* or the using up of sex-energy in other pursuits, becomes of value. Sex energy, as we have seen, is creative energy, and is at the bottom of all creative efforts of whatever kind, and where it cannot be repressed or ignored without disastrous results it can be turned into other channels and made to serve socially useful ends. This is the reason for the insistence upon a wide range of interests in adolescence; games and sports, outdoor life, recreation and amusements have their legitimate place in any scheme of education. The more things a girl can do and enjoy the

<sup>1</sup>*Essays in War Time*, p. 146.

better is she fortified against the loneliness and boredom that send her to questionable places of amusement or lead her to take a long chance in the hope of finding companionship and pleasure. But this is not enough, as our restless youth who race from one pleasure to another and find no abiding charm in any of them, eloquently testify.

Work, achievement, the joy of creation, of doing something worth while, something into which she can put her very self is a most necessary outlet for that creative energy which, in the woman, normally expends itself in the bearing and rearing of children. And in this respect our industrial civilization, where men and women are the slaves of machines, is far inferior to its predecessors, when each must learn some trade or occupation and carry its processes through to the finished product. The girl of our grandmother's day was an adept in those household arts which have now been taken over in their entirety by the factory. Pride of workmanship and the joy of creation, delight in the beauty or value of her work, were hers to a degree which perhaps the majority of girls today never experience. We cannot go back to our grandmother's day, but we must realize that much that we deplore in the modern girl—her restlessness, her mad chase after pleasure, her craving for experience at any cost—is but the

expression of that creative energy which, diverted from its normal goal, must seek an outlet otherwise. The girl who spends all day in mill or factory or office performing a routine operation over and over, the one who drags out weary hours at distasteful work which means nothing to her but the wage she gets out of it rushes to anything that offers to divert her mind and relieve her strained nerves when the working day is over. And equally so, the girl who has no occupation, no real interests nor opportunity for self-expression, is driven to mad lengths by the surge of energy within her.

To help every girl find herself in creative work, express herself through some vocation or avocation in which she can take pride and joy, is the ideal we must hold before us in sex education—in all education—no matter how far off its fulfillment may seem. There are not wanting signs of a new day in education. All over Europe, even amid the chaos of post-war conditions, "new schools" are flourishing, schools which place the emphasis upon individual development and which set as their goal the full realization of the inherent possibilities of the child's soul. And at various places in this country educational movements are in progress which seek the same ends. The ideals of self-development and self-realization are by no means new in the history of

education, but today we have a far better understanding of what they imply, and of the means to be employed for their realization.

Religion, also, when properly taught, not as dogma to be blindly accepted, but as a living faith, putting the girl in contact with the beneficent forces of the universe, setting her tasks of self-sacrifice, and sending her on errands of love and mercy, is a most effective means of sublimation. The love which fills the heart of the adolescent girl streams normally upward and outward; to love God and to love her fellow creatures is natural to her, and the ideals of character and service that religion sets before her are unequalled in any other sphere of human thought.

When we come to practical questions of training for marriage and motherhood, we encounter many difficulties. It may be argued that since the majority of girls actually do marry and become mothers—and unless the race is to become extinct the majority must continue to do so—all girls should be trained in the principles of home making and the care of children. On the other hand, there are many girls who, by reason of inherited disease or physical or mental defect, should never be allowed to marry, and any training which directs their attention to marriage and motherhood is unwise, to say the least.



Again, at the time when such training is usually given, in the early teens, the average girl is only superficially interested, and her instruction is likely to be forgotten when it is actually needed. Yet again, there are girls to whom domesticity and children seem to make no appeal and who cannot be interested in the practical questions pertaining to these subjects. The time when the girl is likely to be vitally interested is when she is contemplating marriage, or when motherhood is actually approaching. The centers which maintain classes for instruction in the care and management of the household and children are always crowded with girls and women, married or expecting to be married, and eager to learn.

However, though we may not be able to interest all girls in preparation for the practical duties of marriage, certainly no girl should be allowed to undertake motherhood without a knowledge of its duties and responsibilities. Upon the mother, more than upon any other factor, depend the child's future chances of happiness and efficiency. If she is indifferent or ignorant or careless, not only the child but society itself will pay the penalty. The appalling ignorance of girls and women upon this their most vital function is evident to anyone who has a wide acquaintance among women, or who takes the trouble to do a little investigating.

Ignorance not only of the child and the mother's relation to it but of the most elementary facts of pregnancy and childbirth is common even today among girls of high-school and college training. In this day of scientific understanding and knowledge, that to a great extent can be obtained for the asking, approach to the problems of marriage and maternity is still for thousands of girls through superstition and old wives' tales.<sup>1</sup> A great deal of this is due to the prudery and silence with which we have been accustomed to surround the whole subject of sex. Another factor of importance in bringing about this attitude is the natural tendency to put off responsibility and to let the girl enjoy youth while it is hers; for the first time in history the girl has a right to her girlhood and to grow and develop to the full stature of her inherent possibilities, unhampered by the burden of childbearing and free from the cares and responsibilities of child rearing. It is no wonder that she is a little intoxicated by this freedom, that she has not yet learned how to use it, and that she often puts as far out of consciousness as possible any reminder of the physical facts of motherhood.

<sup>1</sup>*Adolescent Interests: A Study of the Sexual Interests and Knowledge of Young Women*, by F. I. Davenport, Ph. D. See reference at the end of the chapter.

But buried far out of sight and ignored as it may be, in every normal girl the maternal urge is there. Maternity, and not mating alone, is her supreme achievement.

To give the girl a normal attitude toward motherhood, to acquaint her with the physical facts as they concern herself and the child, to give her an understanding of the psychological significance of infancy and the transcendent importance of the mother in the child's life, is perhaps the most important task which her education has to perform. It is, moreover, a stupendous task at the present time, when society is in a state of flux, when old ideals are changing and so much of the trend of thought and action is away from the home and toward the so-called larger spheres of influence for women.

We cannot turn back the clock of progress, and would not if we could, but if we look toward the future in the hope for a higher type of humanity we must devise some way to bring to the adolescent girl an understanding of the significance of her potential motherhood.

In the training and education of the adolescent girl, then, we will, if we are wise, be guided by the girl herself. No matter how much we may wish it otherwise, we must take her as we find her, whether well or poorly endowed, and help her to realize her

highest possibilities. We must cease to think of education as the acquisition of knowledge. It must be knowledge suited to the girl's powers of assimilation, and beyond that it must be training—training of the body to develop its hidden resources of grace and strength; training of abilities and aptitudes to bring pleasure to the girl and add to the sum of human happiness; training of the emotions into normal attitudes toward reality; training of the instinctive life to function normally, and with its excess energy sublimated into work and play that bring joy and satisfaction to the girl and are of value to society. Education usually succeeds but poorly in this task; we set up our own goals and force her toward them; we hedge her round with restrictions and barriers; we deny her knowledge which she craves and force upon her that for which she has no spontaneous desire; and when she fails in social adjustment we cannot see that the reason is largely because we have failed to take account of her individual needs and desires.

Between youth and age there is always a great gulf fixed. Each generation cries out that its young is too different from itself, that it is tearing down the old traditions and ideals, that its ambitions must be curbed and its activities restrained. Jealousy of

the old regarding the young, of those in positions of power and authority regarding the threatened usurpers is far older than the human race and has its roots in the egoism and love of life which is a fundamental law of every species. But today youth is less inclined than ever to submit to this attitude of its elders. All over the world we find it rebellious against old forms and traditions, throwing off the yoke of authority whether parental, political or religious, boldly proclaiming its right to the pursuit of love and truth and beauty, and to shape its own life in freedom from within.

Today as never before in history the adolescent girl is daring to assert herself, to demand her rights and privileges, and even to be shown all mysteries and all knowledge. No longer does she take with any degree of meekness what has been provided for her but she is demanding to sit down with man as an equal sharer in the feast of life. For him, self-realization and the chance for self-development, the opportunity for self-expression in any field that suits his powers; for her, the same. We, her elders, with the taste of our own disillusionment bitter in our mouths, can but gape and wonder at her reckless plucking at the tree of life. What, we ask ourselves, after all, can we do for her? She is facing conditions new in the history of the race; she is attacking age-old

problems in settings so new that we do not recognize them; she must fight her own battles and learn her own lessons, as women have done since the world began. Our part is finished when we have done our best to understand her, to bring her to maturity armed with health of body and mind and equipped with knowledge of herself and her long racial history; henceforth we will do best to let her alone. For to her and not to us belongs the future.

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